

A
D E F E N C E
(By Mr. Richard ^{Smith}) OF THE
ANSWER and ARGUMENTS
OF THE
S Y N O D

Met at BOSTON in the Year 1662.

Concerning { The SUBJECT OF BAPTISM,
AND
(CONSOCIATION OF CHURCHES.

Against the REPLY made thereto, by the Reverend
Mr. JOHN DAVENPORT, Pastor of the
Church at New-Haven, in his Treatise Entituled,
Another ESSAY for Investigation of the Truth, &c.

Together with

A N A N S W E R
(By Mr. John ^{Smith}) TO THE
APOLOGETICAL PREFACE

Set before that ESSAY, *which was writ
by Mr. Pierpont*

By some of the ELDERS who were Members of the
SYNOD above-mentioned.

- 1 Thess. 5. 21. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
1 Chron. 28. 8. Keep and seek for all the Commandments of the Lord your God; that ye
may possess this good Land, and leave it for an Inheritance for your Children after
you for ever.

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never yet been admitted to the Lords Table. *Forma ac Ratio Ecclesiast. Minis-
tr. Peregrinor. Ecclesiæ infinita Londini, &c. Pag. 117—123, 135. with Pag. 86,
104, 107, 108.*

Holy Baynes accounts, that Children are a part of the Church, *Diocæs. Tryall, pag. 84.* And the Principles pointed to in his Christian Letters; Letter 15. *pag. 125, 126.* and Letter 24. *pag. 199, 203. Edit. 1637.* Also in his Exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians, on Chap. 1. 1. *Doct. 7.* and on Chap. 2. 12. *Pag. 276, 277.* and other places, may easily be improved unto a Confirmation of the Doctrine of the Synod.

Dr. Ames (whom the Preface calls for-ever Famous, Judicious, &c. and that very deservedly) how large his Judgement is as to the Subject of Baptism, may be seen by any that have his *Cases of Conscience, Lib. 4. Cap. 27.* He requires no more unto the most proper right of a Child to Baptism, but that the Parents or one of them be *intra Ecclesiam*, within the Church; though he thinks that others also may be baptized, if any godly persons will undertake for their Education. And how plainly he holds forth the Doctrine of the Synod in his *Medulla, Lib. 1. Cap. 32. Thes. 12, 13. & Cap. 40. Thes. 11, 12, 13.* is easie to be Collected.

We may well here take up the words of worthy Mr. Cotton, in his Preface before Mr. Norriss Answer to Apollonius, where having named Cartwright, Parson, Baynes, and Ames, those Charismatic and Horsemen of Israel, and Leaders in the Cause of Reformation, he adds, *Ab horum sive vestigiis, sive principijs si novitatis studio cessimus, jure meritis deseremus ut desertores.* Quod si in viâ illorum ambulamus nec ultra progredimur (quod ad summam rei attinet) quam ab illorum Lumine Divinitus collustrati, certe non nos illi sumus, qui causam Reformationis deseruimus, sed illi potius (quos lubens nollem dicere) qui nos ut Desertores deserunt & deserantur. So here: If we out of any changeable Inclinations, or Spirit of Innovation, have departed from the footsteps or principles of those Blessed Patrons of Reformation (such as were now named, and others of The good Old Non-Conformists, who both with Prayers, Tears and Sufferings, and with as much judicious Learning and Piety as the World hath yet seen, have handed down to us the Work and way of Reformation) then let us be, and well might we be deserted and censured as Desertors or Apostates (as we are by too many) But if we adhere to the Principles, and tread in the steps of those Worthies, and go no further then they, or then the Light which God hath communicated by them doth lead us, surely we have not deserted nor departed from the Cause of Reformation; But they rather (though unwillingly we speak it) who desert and dislike us as Desertors.

The Elders and Messengers of the Congregational Churches in England, in the Preface to the Result of their meeting at the Savoy, do profess a full concurrence throughout in all the substantial parts of Church-government with their Reverend Brethren the Old Puritan Non-Conformists, citing in the Margin Fox, Deering, Greenham, Cartwright, Fenner, Fulke, Whitaker, Reynolds, Perkins, &c. Now let the Judgement of these (such of them as have left any thing written about this Question, by which we may judge of the mindes of the rest) be considered; and see if they do not abundantly confirm such a Latitude of Baptism as we plead for. What if our Congregational Brethren in England have not yet, by reason of the Infancy of their Churches, had so much occasion to look into this question (as our selves for a long time had not) nor yet so much need to trouble themselves about the full extent of Baptism, in a place where there were now that would baptize those whom themselves left unbaptized? yet when the Lord shall incline any of those Able and Worthy Persons to set themselves to the study of this point: why should we think that they will not be willing to receive Light from, or that they will be willing easily to go against the Judgements of those Old Non-Conformists, whom they professedly concur with in other parts of Discipline? So much for the Discourse upon the first Objection.

In Answer to the Second Objection, The Apologist gives this warning, *Let us not for fear of Anabaptism, do worse, even desile our selves with Antichristianism.* And makes this Profession, *We are willing to profess that we look upon it as great a sin to Baptize all Children, as to Baptize no Children.*

Ans. 1. We should not chuse to put Anabaptism as contradicting to Antichristianism.

Take *Antichristianism* for all that which is against Christ his Mind, Rules and Kingdome; so surely *Anabaptism* is a part of it. Take it for the corruptions of the Papacy, how near a-kin the Doctrines and Principles of the Papists and Anabaptists are, is shewed in a late Preface to Mr. Sheppard's Letter. The *Anabaptists* are indeed ready enough to call every thing that they mislike, *Antichristian*; as if none were Enemies to *Antichristianism* so much as they. But if to oppose, obstruct, and undermine the Kingdome of our Lord Jesus Christ, be an *Antichristian thing*, let Scripture, Reason, and Experience speak, whether their Tenents and Wayes be not highly *Antichristian*. Does not their cutting off so great a part of the Subjects of Christs Kingdome, as the Children of the Faithfulare (Mat. 19. 14.) their changing the Frame of the Covenant, whereby his visible Kingdome in his Church is constituted and continued, &c. give (though secretly, and under plausible pretences) a most deep and dangerous Wound to the Interest and Progress of Christs Kingdome? And hath not Experience shewed *Anabaptism* (with its wonted concomitant Errours) to be the Vexation and Clog of Reformation ever since the beginning of it.

2. To speak here of baptizing the Children of *Infidells* and *Pagans*, as if any did incline to that, would be a strange absurdity: but it by [*All children*] be meant the Children of *All* that are named *Christians*, though we think it too great a laxness to baptize all such, yet we are past doubt, that so to do is farre nearer the Rule and Mind of Christ, when he sayes [*Disyle a. Nations, baptizing them*] then to baptize no Children. Let us be farre from making *Eucan, Zanchy, Calvin, Perkins*, and many other Eminent and Worthy Divines, who are for such a Latitude of baptizing, to be equally erroneous with the *Anabaptists*. Let no one make it a Temptation to himself or others, to run to *Antipædobaptism*, because he hears the Assertors of Infant-Baptism plead for a greater Latitude of Baptism then he thinks is (or perhaps then indeed is) meet. Error in particular Applications of the Rule, is farre less then error in a Principle. *Anabaptism* erres in a Principle, and principal Rule of Church-constitution. And he that narrowly observes the frame of Christs Rules and Dispensations about this matter, will find much of that Maxime in them, *Favores sunt ampliandi*. We see the Lord takes in the Children or *Holy*, if but one of the Parents be a Believer; he appoints us to *Receve the weak*, as well as the strong. We find not that the Apostles refused any that were willing to come in, and to be Subjects of Christs visible Kingdome: neither are persons or people utterly Broken off from a portion in the visible Church, till after all means and long patience used, &c. As if Christ studied the *Inlargement* of his visible Kingdome among men (*i. e.* as much as may be with the honour of his Holings and Government) rather then the *straitning* thereof. Many Pious-minded persons among us are very fearful of *Inlarging*, and of *Corruption* that way: But why should we not also be afraid of grieving the heart of Christ (Mark 10. 14) by too much *straitning*, and by keeping or putting out those whom Christ takes in? For we may not take away or diminish from the Word of God, no more then we may *add* thereto, Deut. 12. 32. The Lord keep us from extremes on either hand, and guide us in the right middle way that is according to his will. But the Preface goes on;

Neither can we plead Guilty unto that Charge, That we deny all Church-membership unto any Infants; we onely deny that they are Personal and Immediate Members. In deed as personal Membership is taken *subjectively*, so we say it is in Infants, *i. e.* their persons are Recipients of the Admitt of Church membership: But as personal Membership is taken *formally*, *i. e.* for such as have by themselves in their own persons entered into Covenant with God and his People, so Infants are not capable of personal Church-membership.

Ans. It is pity to clog and cloud the plain things of Christ with intricate distinctions, which do rather bemit and puzzle the Readers understanding, then enlighten it. One would think it should suffice men to know that their Children are (by the Lords rich grace and appointment) in their own persons *within* the Covenant, and so Members of the Church, without disputing whether they be so *subjectively* or *formally*, &c. And should such distinctions pass for current, what other use they would be of, we know not; but sure we are, they would do great service to the *Anabaptists*, though we believe that is not the Intendment of our Brethren, to comply with, or build up *Anabaptism*. But we are not now speaking to Intentions or Persons, but to Arguments and Distinctions in themselves considered. For, suppose one give this Argument for Infant-Baptism (and in-

It is no very good signe of truth, when there are many curious, nice, & dark distinctions used to defend a thing
Vid. Ansf. Bellar.
Enerv. Tom. 2. l.
6. cap. 5. quest. ult.
And his Fresh
Suit, par. 1. pag.
62. 82. 124 —
128.

need we know not a better) *Members of the visible Church are to be baptized: Infants of Confederate Parents are Members of the visible Church: Ergo.* How readily may it be answered, that *Personal and Immediate Members* (or they that have personal Membership formally) are to be baptized; but not *Mediate and Not-personal Members*, or they that have it (not formally, but) *subjectively only*. We have known an *Antipædobaptist* tie to this as his *Shear-Anchor* [*Infants are Members; but how? Why, not personal Members, but Members in their parents; and so let them be baptized (mediately) in their parents, and not in their own persons.*] And indeed, why should the Seal of Membership be immediately and formally applied to their own persons, if they be not in their own persons Immediate and formal (or formally) Members?

But let us search a little into this Distinction between *Personal Membership* as taken *subjectively*, and the same as taken *formally*, and see what there is in it, with reference to the matter in hand. For, that *Children are personal and immediate Members*, is asserted and proved by the Synod, but denied by our Brethren: And this Distinction is here brought to bear up that *Denial*, or to tell us in what sense they deny personal Membership to Infants. It was sometimes roundly denied, that *Infants are personal Members*; now it is denied with a *Distinction*: They are *personal Members* (say they) *subjectively*, but not *formally*.

Ans. 1. If Infants be Members, they are *formally* so: for, *Forma est per quam res est id quod est*. If we say, Such an one is a Man, a Father, a Master, &c. we must mean that he is *formally* a man, or hath the form of a man, &c. He is not a Member, that hath not the *form* of a Member. To say he is a Member, and to deny him the *form* of a Member, is to say and unsay.

2. It is here said, that, *As personal Membership is taken subjectively, so it is in Infants, i. e. their persons are Recipients of the Adjunct of Church-membership*. We demand, whether this does not fully yield the Cause, and give us as much as we need to the matter in hand? For, if the *person* of the Infant be *Recipient of the Adjunct of Church-membership*, then of *formal Church-membership* (it is not Church-membership, if it want the *form*) then *formal* (or proper) Church-membership, doth cleave to the *person* of the Infant; then the *person* of this Infant is *formally* a Church-member, or, He is a *personal formal Member*. He needs no more to render him a *personal formal Member* (or *formally* a *personal Member*) then to have the *Adjunct of Church-membership* upon him, or cleaving to his person. For *Membership* (as all such like relations, Fatherhood, Sonship, &c.) is but an *Adjunct*; it enters not into the *Essence* of any man, but cleaves to him as an *Adjunct*. And so no man is more then *subjectively* a Member (the most *formally* *personal Member* that is, is but *subjectively* a Member in this sense) i. e. He is a *subject Recipient of Membership*, or one that hath the *Adjunct of Membership* cleaving to him. If therefore the *person* of the Infant be *Recipient of the Adjunct of Church-membership*, then he is a *personal formal Member*, or *formally* a *personal Member*, for his person hath the *form* of Membership upon it, or cleaving to it.

3. When it's said, [*But as personal Membership is taken formally, i. e. for such as have by themselves in their own persons entered into Covenant with God and his People; so Infants are not capable of personal Membership*] What Logick is this, to put the *Efficient* for the *Form*, or to make it a part thereof? It is wont to be said, *Efficiens non ingreditur Effectum*. The act of *Covenanting* on our part, whereby we are brought into the Church, is but an *Efficient* (yea, but an *instrumental Efficient*: the Book calls it a *Procreant cause*, pag. 37. that is still but an *Efficient*; yet consider it in contradistinction to *Divine Institution*, it can but *instrumentally* procreate) But the *form*, or *formal* Ratio of Membership, is to be *within the Covenant*, or *within the Church*, 1 Cor. 5. 12. Whatever causality our *Act* in procreating and *Covenanting* do contribute to bring us in, it can be but an *Efficient*: And hence it doth not denominate or constitute the *formality* of our Membership.

Object. But [*Formally*] here is referred to *personal*, not to *membership*.

Ans. If so it be, yet still the same Answers hold, unless it mean no more then every one grants, and so be nothing to the purpose. If the meaning only be that Infants do not enter into Covenant by an act of their own proper persons; who ever said or thought they did? what need we labour in finding out distinctions to deny them that which no

body ever challenged for them? or to what purpose is that? But the Question is, *Whether Infants be not personal members* (or personally and formally members) although they never yet put forth an *Act* of covenanting in their own persons? we affirm it, because they have the forme of Membership (or the adjunct of formal membership) cleaving to their own persons by Divine Institution. And so we say they are personally and formally Members, though they have not yet acted any thing in their own proper persons. You seem to deny it, and bring a distinction to clear your meaning: the former Branch of which distinction, as your selves explain it, grants the thing that we plead for; the latter Branch, as you also explain it, denies no more then we deny, viz. *That they enter by their own proper personal Act*. But the mistake lies in making this [viz. *Entering by ones own proper Act*] to be formally personal membership: whereas that is formally personal membership, that doth formally and properly constitute the person a member; and so, [*Being within the Covenant*] doth the Infants in question, though they never yet acted in their own persons. The distinction should rather stand thus; As personal membership is taken properly and formally, so it agrees to Infants; i. e. their persons are Recipients of the adjunct of proper formal Church-membership, but as personal membership is taken improperly (and very improperly indeed) i. e. for the membership of such as have by themselves or by their own personal profession entered into Covenant, so Infants are not capable of personal membership. This might be granted. But why should we use *personal membership* in so improper a sense, or insist on a sense that toucheth not the cause in question? The sum is, that if by [*Personal membership taken formally*] be meant onely, entering by their own proper personal act, then the distinction is needless and not *ad Rem*. But if it be meant so as to deny what we affirm, then it is overthrown by your selves in the former Branch. Grant them to be personal Members *subjectively*, you therein grant them to be so *formally*: deny them personal membership *formally*, you deny it *subjectively*. These do *mutuo se ponnere & tollere*, being used in any sense that is proper and pertinent to the present Dispute. But consider whether it would sound rationally to say, that Paul was not *formally* a personal Roman (or not formally a Roman free-man in his own person) because he did not buy his freedom with his own money; or that a Child who hath an Inheritance left him, is not *formally* a personal owner thereof, because himself did not purchase it; or, that Infants are personal Subjects in such a Kingdome, Members of such a Family, *subjectively* onely, not *formally*, because they did not become such by their own previous personal act. These and such like shew how improper and incongruous it is, to make ones own personal act to be that which constitutes the formality of personal membership.

Preface. It's strange to us to conceive, that they should have this *personal formal membership*, and yet that they should not be Subjects capable of formal personal Censures.

Ans. They are capable in regard of their Relation and state in the Church, though not in regard of natural Capacity, nor in regard of demerit; for an Infant cannot Ecclesiastically deserve publick Censure. It is not strange to conceive Infants to be Subjects of such a Prince, though at present incapable of civil Tryals and punishments. It suffices that Infant-members are in a state of subjection to Church Discipline, and invaded thereto for afterward, though at present naturally incapable of the exercise thereof. The new-born Infant is not capable of Domestical Discipline (either Rod or Rebuke) but that hinders not his being a formal personal Member of the Family.

Preface. We neither do, nor ever did deny, that, the persons of Infants of believing confederate Parents, are brought under the Covenant, onely we conceive that their membership is conjunct with, and dependent upon the Membership and Covenant of their Parents, so as to live and lyeth therewith. Hence when the Parents are Excommunicated, the membership of the Infant-child is cut off, because Excommunication puts an end to the outward Covenant (which Death it self doth not do) and if the Root be destroyed, the Branches cannot live.

Ans. That the childes membership depends upon the membership of the Parent, as the Instrumental Cause or Condition of the childes first Entrance into the Church, or becoming a Member, we readily grant (because Divine Institution admitteth onely the Children of Members to be Members) and so much Mr. Cottons words here alluded in the Preface do truly teach. But that the childes membership is so *wrapt up* in the membership of the Parent, as to live and dye therewith, as if it had no proper and distinct membership

membership of its own, is surely a deep mistake, and will (if followed) overthrow that *subjective personal membership* before granted unto Infants, and that which is here also owned, viz. that *their persons are brought under the Covenant* : If the persons of the Infants be brought under the Covenant, then their persons are *within* the Covenant, or their persons are *Confederate*, then not onely the person of the Parent, but the person of the Child hath the formality of membership upon it. And as the person of the child in regard of its natural being, though for the first existence thereof it depended under God upon the Parent, yet when once it is born into the World, it is not so *conjunct with, and dependent upon* the person of the Parent, as to live and dye *therewith* ; so why should the membership of the child be *thus dependent* ? seeing the Book (to which this Preface is prefixed) affirmeth, p. 37. that the Parent is a *procreant Cause*, as of the Childes natural Being by his generating him; so also of his Church-membership by his confederating for him, and *thus by Gods Institution*. And seeing the person of the Child hath a membership of its own affixed to it (as the fore said grants import) and that from God (from Gods Covenants and Institution) as well as the person of the Parent ; why should we say, that the membership of the Child doth after this, *depend upon* the Membership or Covenant of the Parent, and not rather upon Gods Covenant and Institution, so as to live and dye according to the Order and appointment thereof, and not otherwise ? hence the *Membership* wherewith the person of the Child is clothed by Gods Institution, dyes not till either the person of the Child dye, or till by some Institution and Appointment of God he be cut off from his Membership for his own sin. Neither must it be yeilded, that the *Excommunication of the Parent*, doth properly and formally cut off the Infant-child that was born before such Excommunication. We say, *properly and formally*, for Consequentially and Eventually it may bring the Child to be cut off also ; as in case the Parent *desperately* go away from the Church among *Hereticks and Infidels*, and bring up the Child to *serve other Gods* : But so it may be with a wife carried away by such an Husband, yet that does not hinder her from having a personal, distinct, proper and immediate Membership, nor make his cutting off to be hers also. But suppose a Parent and Children that live and continue among us ; the Parent having a company of Children, all in their minority, is for his wickedness cast out, and continuing impenitent, dyes in that estate : to say that all these Children (who were Born and Baptized in the Church) are *cut off* from Membership hereby, is a strange Assertion.

For 1. This would make an Infant-child to be a subject of Excommunication, which was before (and in regard of natural capacity and demerit, rightly) denied.

2. If a Parent in *Israel* was for his sin cut off from his people, were the Children that he left behind him therefore excluded from the Commonwealth of *Israel* ? to be sure, in Crimes capitally punished (of which *cutting off* from their People is sometimes plainly meant, *Exod. 31. 14, 15. Levit. 17. 4. & 18. 29. & 20. 18.*) the Child was not to dye for the Fathers sin, *Deut. 24. 16. 2 Chron. 25. 4. Jer. 31. 30. Ezek. 18. 20.* and is there not the like reason of other punishments, whether Ecclesiastical or Civil ? *yes, that cutting off from their People* appointed in the Law, is conceived by judicious Interpreters to be in some places most properly meant of an Ecclesiastical Death, or *cutting off from the People and Church of God by Excommunication* ; But however, it held a proportion with Excommunication now under the Gospel. The Child may be barred from a *Right or Privilege* that he never had, by the sin or condition of the Parent : so Heathen Children are *unclean and without*, because their Parents are so. (Hence Children born after the Parents Excommunication are not of the Church :) But to be deprived of a *Right or Privilege* which he once had, and was possessed of (which is the case of Children formerly born in the Church, and owned as Members by the seal of Baptism) this hath in it the nature of a proper formal Punishment or Censure, and this is inflicted upon none but for his own sin. A Parent Civilly or Naturally dead, cannot after that bring forth Children to the Commonwealth ; nor can a Parent Ecclesiastically dead (he so continuing) bring forth Children to the Church. But the Children that are already Members of the one Society or of the other, are not to be *cut off* therefrom for their Parents sin.

3. That, *If the Root be destroyed, the Branches cannot live*, is a truth in nature of Branches growing on the same Tree : But if these Branches be taken and set upon a *Stock*, and Root of their own, (though but as in a *Nursery*) then they do not die when the old

Tree dies, or is cut up by the Roots. And so is the Case in hand. These Children are inserted and implanted into the Church, the *Body of Christ*, in their own persons (as was but now granted, when it was said, *The persons of these Infants do receive the Adjunct of Church-membership*, and that *their persons are brought under the Covenant*) and have to farre taken root therein, as to receive (not from their Parents, but from the Church, and from the Soil and Fatnel thereof) the Sap and Nourishment of Baptism, which is also a Seal of the establishment or rooting of their Membership. Branches included and contained in the Root (as Children yet unborn, or not born till after Excommunication) are broken off (or rather left without) together with their Parents: But not such Branches as are already severed from the Root, and planted in the *House of God*, in the *Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts*, as through the grace of the Covenant our Children are, *Isa. 5. 7.*

4. That Death does not put an end to the outward Covenant, which Excommunication does, is a Notion that we understand not: We should have thought that outward Membership (or Membership in the visible instituted Church) as well as the use of all outward Ordinances, or instituted Worship, had everlastingly ceased at Death. The Ends, Duties and Enjoyments of outward Membership, do then cease, and so the Membership it self. The Lord knows how many may from outward Membership in the visible Church, drop to Hell; and does not their Death put an end to their Membership? And if Death put an end to outward Membership, it puts an end to outward Covenant in the sense of the Question, i. e. as to the person that dies. Indeed it does not hinder the continuance of the Covenant to others that are in Covenant, and are surviving: And neither does Excommunication so do. But the person of the Parent loses his Membership in the visible Church when he dies, as well as when he is Excommunicated. And hence if the Membership of the Child did live and die with the Membership of the Parent, there would be a Cessation of it in the one case, as well as in the other. A Parents Faith, Prayers, and Covenant may live, though his self be dead: But how? i. e. Virtually, in the virtue and effect of them: And how is that? why, the promise made by God to the Faith, Prayers, and Profession (or Covenanting) of a godly Parent, that lives, and abides, and takes effect. So then it is neither the Parent, nor his Membership, but Gods Covenant that lives, taking in the Children that are begotten or born of Confederate Parents, to be Members of his visible Church, and so continuing them, till by some Rule or Appointment of his they be cut off. In like manner, though the Parent by his sin and wickedness have deprived himself of a portion in Israel, and be cut off by the Censure of Excommunication; yet the Covenant of God lives, and stands to the Children whom he had before taken into Covenant, and planted in his House. To call it *The Covenant of their Parents*, and to say that *Childrens Membership is dependent upon that*, is too crude a phrase, and too much abused by many, ascribing that to the Parents, and to their Profession (or Act in Covenanting) which belongs most properly to God, and his Grace. 'Tis Gods Covenant that takes in both Parents and Children. Alas, what are Parents! and what could all their Profession, and Faith, and Attings do, if God did not vouchsafe to take them into Covenant? Now God taketh the Child into his Covenant, as well as the Parent: And 'tis Gods Covenant and Institution that the Membership of the Child depends upon, and with which alone it lives and dies. But it follows in the Preface:

True it is, that we have made much use of that Distinction of Immediate and Mediate Members, which seems to us to carry a mighty and constraining Evidence of Scripture-Light along with it, &c.

Ans. We must needs say this seems strange to us, when as there is not so much as one Scripture brought (either here, or in the Book following) to make good or hold forth such a Distinction. In stead of Scriptures, here are some Authors straight named, not to Attest the Distinction of Immediate and Mediate. (it seems that cannot be found, no not so much as in Authors) but of Complete and Incomplete. To which the Answer is ready:

1. If some Authors have so distinguished Members, yet where is such a distinction of Membership? at least purposely so intended, as to make several sorts or kinds of Membership specifically differing, as is expressly said of the Distinction here pleaded for in the Book, pag 27. Dr. Ames, in the place here cited, does not say of *Infantis*. *Non sunt perfecti Membra*, but *Perfecta Membra*: Neither does he say, *Non sunt perfecti*, but

Non-

Non sunt adeo perfecta Membra: They are not so perfect Members (saith he) of the Church, as that they can exercise acts of Communion, or be admitted to partake of all the Privileges thereof: Plainly reterring the Imperfection or Incompleatness, not to the Essence of their Membership, but to the Degree of their Communion and Privileges. Hence,

2. Their Distinction of Members into Compleat and Incompleat, is (being candidly taken) as much as our Distinction of Members into such as are in full (or compleat) Communion, and such as are not yet in full Communion; which Distinction we have (and we hope justly) made great use of. And for such a distinction *Res ipsa loquitur*. All that are within (or, or belonging to) such a Society, whether *Essentially, Commonwealth, or Church*, are truly and properly said to be Members of that Society; but all are not equal in participation of Privileges therein: Some have a more full (or compleat) share and portion therein, and some have less. All Christs Scholars (or Disciples) are not of the Highest Form; nor are all his Subjects entrusted with the *Keyes of his Kingdome*; nor all his Children past their Non-age, &c. But yet they are all Disciples in his School, Subjects of his Kingdome, Children of his Family, i.e. Members of the visible Church. But such a Distinction as maketh several sorts of Membership specifically different, we have not yet seen cleared and confirmed, either from Scripture, or Authors, or from sound Reason. Sundry distinctions or sorts of Members, might easily be given; as, Some Members are in Office in the Church, some out of Office; some partake of the Lords Supper, but not of the power of Voting, (as Women) some of both; some have onely Initial Privileges, some Ad. (*Amer. Mech. Lib. 1. Cap. 32. Thef. 13.*) But these are but distributions ex *Adjunctis*, and do not touch or vary the Essence of Membership, nor make several sorts thereof. Nor do these Distinctions and Degrees of Members in the Church, arise simply from the nature of Membership, or from any difference therein, but from something superadded unto Membership: As an Officer is not more a Member than another; but his dignity and place in the Church ariseth from somewhat superadded unto Membership, viz. *His Office*. A man is not more a Member than a woman, though he hath a power and privilege in the Church (besides and above bare Membership) which the woman hath not. So men and women that partake of the Lords Table, are not more (or more truly, properly, immediately and personally) Members of the Church, then Children are; but they having attained to more and further qualifications, (or to a greater degree of growth in the Church) are by Rule admitted to more Privileges than they. Thus in a Kingdome or Commonwealth, there are many sorts of Subjects: some bear Office, some not; some admitted to Election of Officers, some not; some capable of Voting and answering for themselves in Law, some are not: But yet they all agree in the relation of a Subject. And who ever made a specifical distinction of that, so as to say (in that sense) some are Mediate Subjects, and some Immediate? The same may be said of a Family, where the youngest Child is as truly, properly, personally and immediately a Member of the Family, as the most grown person, though as to power and privileges therein there be a vast difference. So in the Natural Body: All the parts are not an Eye, an Hand, &c. but all are Members; and the meanest part is as well a Member, as the most noble, 1 Cor. 12. 22—25. Now there is the like reason, as to the general nature of Membership, in a Church-Society, which is set forth by that of a Kingdome, Family, and of the Natural Body, in the holy Scriptures. And so much for the Discourse upon the second Objection.

In the third place, our Brethren set down this Position or Opinion, as that which is objected against them, That a person who is a Church-member may become no Member by an act or defect of his own, without any Church-act in Censuring of him: and to it is they say, most true it is that we do maintain this. And for Proof thereof, they suppose the Instance of an English Fugitive, of one turned Turk, who was never Confessed by any Church.

Ans. The Position objected against them, if it be pertinent to the matter in hand, must run thus; That a person who is a Church-member may become no Member by an act or defect of his own, without any Church-act in Censuring of him: and without defect or Censure on his part; or though he do not so much as deserve any Church-censure, and be not censurable by any Rule of Gods Word. For so the words of the Synod (in defence of the Controversed fifth Proposition) do expressly speak, putting that as an *Adjunct* to that

A person admitted Member, and Sealed by Baptism, not cast out, nor deserving so to be, may (the Church whereof he was, still remaining) become a Non-member, and out of the Church, and of the unclean world, pag. 26. Now put but this into the Objection here mentioned [Without desert of Church-censure] which is manifestly the case of the persons described in the Synods fifth Proposition; and then all the discourse in Answer to this Objection (wherein not a little confidence and spirit is expressed) falls to the ground as not reaching the case in hand; though besides there are sundry mistakes in it as may after appear. For, suppose it should be granted, that in Churches where Discipline is not in use, and in a case notorious, wherein a person does apparently lose the Essentials of Christianity (as by turning Turk, or the like) a man may be cut off from Membership by his own Apostasy and Wickedness, though the Church did not (through her sinful neglect) formally censure him. Yet this on the other hand is also a sure and clear Truth, that no act of a mans own, will or can cut him off from Membership, but that which deserves a cutting off by censure, and for which the Church should cut him off by censure if she did her Duty. This is plain, because when a man is once in the Church, he cannot be outed, till God out him: God does not out him, till some Rule or appointment of his in his word does out him: but there is no Rule that appoints any man to be put out of the visible Church, or made as an Heathen and Publican, but for and upon such wickedness of his as is Censurable by the Church; and in that case the Rule does appoint and injoin the Church to Censure him, or to put him away from among them by censure, Mat. 18. 17. 1 Cor. 5. 5, 13. When some Divines do so speak as if persons might be broken off from the Church without a formal Censure in some extraordinary cases; the meaning is, not that a man doth by his own wickedness, be it never so notorious, immediately so become *Felo de se*, or *Un-member* himself, as that the Church hath nothing to do with him to Censure him; yes, she may and ought to censure him for his wickedness and Apostasy; and so if a Church-member turn Turk, or Papist, the Church to which he belongs ought to lay him under Censure for it. And for such a one to be a Member till Censured, i. e. A rotten Member fit to be cut off, is no contradiction nor absurdity.

(c) His words are these: Any such notorious offender (having named Atheists, Mockers of Religion, Witches, Idolaters, Papists) may have the essence and being of a member of the Church, as visible, to wit, in this sense, a corrupt and rotten member, fit to be cut off. A member of the visible Church (though formerly an inoffensive professor of the faith) may afterwards fall away into any of these notorious scandals, and yet for a while still retain the essence and being of a member of the Church as visible, to wit, till the Church have orderly proceeded against him; otherwise the Church should want power to proceed to the excommunication of such a notorious delinquent. For what hath the Church to do to judge men without? 1 Cor. 5. 12. But such within the Church are to be cast out, 1 Cor. 5. 11.

See Mr. Cottons Holiness of Church-members, pag. 15. (c) And did all Churches in the world do their duty, there should no man living, that ever was a Member of a Church yet in Being, be looked upon as a Non-member, but he that is so Censured or Excommunicated, at least unless some extraordinary and rare circumstances of a case do render the Churches cognizance thereof impossible. But the meaning onely is, that where men have palpably and notoriously lost the Essentials of Christianity, And a Church, through the sinful want or neglect of Discipline, never looks after them (onely by her Doctrine declares against such) but haply continues in that neglect from age to age, there the Notoriousness of the Case, and the Evidence of the Rules, does supply the defect of a Judicial Sentence, and the Churches Doctrinal Declaration may be looked at as an implicate Excommunication. And hence other Churches may justly carry toward such as Non-members: And hence also in the day of the Reformation of such Churches, after deep and long-continued Corruptions, such persons may be set by without a formal Censure. But what is all this to the Children of our Churches? who being admitted in minority, in stead of notorious Wickedness and Apostacy, when grown up, do in some measure own the God and Covenant of their fathers, and are neither cast out, nor deserve so to be; whom no Rule in all the Scripture appointeth to be put out of the visible Church: And hence they stand and continue Regular (i. e. according to the Appointment and Allowance of the Rule) Members of it, being neither Excommunicated, nor by Rule to be Excommunicated. Where shall we finde either Scripture or Sound Reason to tell us, that these have cut themselves off from Membership, or are now become Non-members?

But to come to a plain and distinct close in this matter, we assert this Position: That in Churches walking in the Order of the Gospel, and Exercising Discipline according to the Rules thereof, no person can (while he lives among them) cease to be a Member of the visible Church but by Excommunication, or, without a Church-act in Censuring him with the

Censure

Censure of Excommunication. The sum of the Proof of this, is, Because we finde this way of cellation of Membership (*viz.* By Excommunication) plainly prescribed and appointed by the Lord in Scripture: And we finde not any other, while the Church and the person continues in Being [See a more particular Proof of it in the Preface to Mr. Shepard's Treatise of *Church-membership of Children*, lately Published.] But if any do affirm there is another way, it lies on them to shew and prove it. Let us now consider whether that be done by all that is here further said.

Preface. When Whitgift said, That Papists and Atheists might still remain Members of the visible Church, Mr. Parker tells him, That even a Verituous would condemn him. And it is no new Doctrine in the Schools, to say, that, An Heretical Apostate is no more a Member of the Church of Christ, then a Wound, a Sore, a Brand, is a member of a man; as every one knows that is mediocriter doctus in Scholastical Divinity. Therefore we conclude, That Church-members may become no Members by their own defection.

Ans. Surely he that is but *mediocriter doctus* in Scholastical or Ictemical Divinity, may easily know that here is the *flow* of an Argument, or of Authority of Writers, wit out the substance of either. For, when our Divines against the Papists do to often over say, that Wicked or Unregenerate persons are but equivocally or improperly Members of the Church, or Nails, Har, Sores, and Superfluous Humours, or as a wooden Leg, a glass Eye, &c. are members of the living Body of a man; they mean it properly, with reference to the invisible mystical Church, or to the visible Church considered in its internal spiritual living state (a), not with reference to mens external standing (or Membership) in the visible Church: Nor did they ever dream that men are by the want of internal gracious qualifications cut off from Membership in the visible Church, without any Church-censure. It is well known, that they reckon Hypocrites and secretly unregenerate persons (as well as heretical Apostates, or the openly wicked) to be but equivocally of the Church (*viz.* in comparison and contradistinction to the true and living members of the Body of Christ; and as Paul distinguishes between Israel, and them that are of Israel, Rom. 9. 6. and says, He is not a Jew, i. e. not a Jew indeed, and accepted in the sight of God, who is cut outwardsly one, Rom. 2. 28. 29.) But would you therefore say, that a close Hypocrite unmembers himself, and falls out of the visible Church without any Church-censure? In the place here cited out of Parker de Polit. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 16. pag. 169. Forſum condemn Bellarminus, because he affirmed such—(a) Ecclesiam Christi proprie diciam reverè pertinere) to be indeed of the true Church. How strangely is this misapplied to the matter in hand (b)? as if one should say, that all that want true saving Faith have lost their Church-membership without any Censure, and then alledge for the Proof of it the Protestant Doctrine, that the true mystical or Catholick Church consists only of Elect Believers: how evident is it that this is not a Rem?

For, as for an External Membership in the Church (which is the matter that we have in hand) what is more known, then that all our Divines do unanimously acknowledge it to be the portion of multitudes that have not *living Grace*? and that even such as have been born and brought up in the Church, if they fall into manifest incorrigible wickedness, they should be removed out of the Church by Excommunication; but otherwise they are still within, although many of them be destitute of those inward qualifications that should render them living and true Members of the Church mystical. *Falsum est* (saith Dr. Ames, Bel. Enerv. Tom 2. Lib. 2. Cap. 1.) *Internas virtutes requiri* (i. e. absolute requiri) *à nobis ut aliquis sit in ecclesiâ quoad visibilem ejus statum.* And see Ames Med. L. b. 1. Cap. 32. Wesf. 11. They that are Christians by profession onely (saith Junius) are trash of the Church, according to the external consideration thereof, though not according to the internal, wherein lies the truth of Christianity. Animad. in Bellar. de Eccles. Cap. 10. Art. 28. And in Cap. 9. Art. 1. he saith, We acknowledge there be grievous sinners in this (*viz.* the visible) Church, in which if they were not, we should in vain trouble our selves about their Correction and Excommunications vid. Calvin. institut. Lib. 4. Cap. 1. Sect. 7, 9, 13. Polan. Syntag. Lib. 7. Cap. 8. But it were a needless labour to cite many Testimonies in to manifest a case. When Whitgift had said, that the Church is full of wicked persons Drunkards, Idolaters, Papists, Atheists &c. Carwight Answers him, (as Parker in the very place here quoted notes) that, that was because the Discipline of Christ was not attended: Censuring that he would have even such not to be left to their own self-silency (if, being Church-

(a) *Eadem Ecclesia & pios habet secum: imformam interam at se pertinentes. Ex impiis atq; hypocritis se unam externam adnascetes.* Jun. Animad. in Bellarm. p. 1113.

(b) It might afford Parker an Argument as to (*manifestissimi peccatores*) the notoriously wicked that they should not be tolerated in the Church, but (as excrementitious things) be purged out by the vigorous use of Discipline, as he there discourseth: but it touches not our question.

members

members they fall to such evils) but to be cut off by Christs appointed Discipline. And *Carrwright* in his second Reply, *Part. 1. p. 246.* upon that in *1 Cor. 5. 11.* among other passages hath these words, *It is one case of him that hath given his name to the Gospel, & afterward slideth from that profession to Idolatry; and another of him that never gave it, but hath been from his Infancy an Idolater; for the first cannot be severed from the Church without solemn Sentence of Excommunication, see also Pag. 242, 247, 248.* But the Preface addes:

And we humbly conceive that thus much is held forth by these Scriptures, Heb. 10. 25, 1 Joh. 2. 19. Jud. 19.

Ans. That the sin of those who forsake Church-assemblies, separate themselves from them, wander into ways of Heresie and Apostacy, is grievous (and consequently calleth for Church-admonition, and incorrigibleness therein for excommunication) this may be gathered from those Scriptures; but to gather thence, that such forsakers, separatists and wanderers, do thereby become Non-members, so as that the Church should not, need not, or may not follow them with any Censure, is a strange Collection; and would (if granted) at once overthrow all Discipline. For what is more easie then for an offender to forsake the Assembly, to separate himself, &c? and then the Church shall have no more to do with him; so the process of Discipline appointed in *Mat. 18.* should never take place. What though there be no mention of Church-censure in the Texts alledged? must we binde the Holy-Ghost to mention all Truths and Rules together in one Text or Context? what the sin of such persons is, those Texts shew; but what Discipline is to be used to Church-runners, this is held forth in other Scriptures. If the Apostle in *1 Joh. 2. 19.* have reference to *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, and such like Hereticks (as is commonly conceived: *vid. Magdeburg. Centur. 1. Lib. 2. p. 485*) surely he was not without care to have due Testimony by Church-censure born against them, yea when as he does so strictly injoin all Christians absolutely to avoid them, *2 Joh. ver. 7—10.* doth not that import an injunction to the Churches unto which they did belong, to Excommunicate them, if they had not already done it? as when *Paul* forbids them to eat with such a one, *1 Cor. 5. 11.* he means it, as a consequent upon (and so implying an injunction of) Church-censure. *vid. Dickson in 2 Thez. 3. 14. & in Rom. 16. 17. & in 2 Tim. 3. 5.*

Preface. Again, how came *Esau* to lose his Membership? We read not that he was excommunicate, therefore it remains that he dis-covenanted, and so dis-Membered himself. And how came the Children of *Abraham* by *Keturah* to lose their Membership? It was not by Censure.

Ans. 1. Should we thus Reason, you would call for Gospel-Rules and Proofs; which we may with more reason do in this case, because proper Excommunication is plainly and expressly ordained under the Gospel: Concerning the use of which, there is not so much clearness in the Old Testament. 2. The particular extraordinary Revelation of Gods minde concerning *Esau*, together with his being denied the Patriarchal Blessing, of which the Apostle saith [*He was rejected*] *Heb. 12. 17.* may well be looked at as equivalent to an ordinary Excommunication under the Gospel. 3. The Posterity of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, did in process of time lose their Membership, by losing the Essentials of true Religion; and to expect personal Excommunication, when a whole People falls away to Idolatry, and so becomes *Lo-am-is*, is a vain thing. But it is a great mistake to think that the particular persons mentioned in *Genes. 25. 2, 3, 4.* yea or their next generations did cease to be Members of the visible Church. They were Provisionally removed out of the Land of *Canaan*, which was reserved for *Israel*, and were permitted by degrees to lose Religion, which was by Promise to be continued and established in the line of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, so as that in the time of *Moses* (the Nations being by that time generally fallen to Idolatry) Religion and Worship was so fixed in the Nation and Church of *Israel*, as that all that would serve God aright must become *Proselytes* to it, which before that time was not necessary. But Religion and Salvation, and consequently Church-membership, according to the *Domestick* way of administration then used, did for a considerable time continue among the Children of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, as the story of *Job* intimates; he and his Friends being justly conceived to have been partly of that Stock. And concerning *Tethro*, who was of *Midian*, and so of *Keturah*, see *Rivet* on *Exod. 2.* and on *Exod. 18. 12.*

Preface. In like sort when persons under the Gospel do not come up to the terms of the Covenant,

Covenant, to shew themselves to be Abrahams Children, by holding forth his Faith, and walking before the Lord in simplicity and Godly sincerity, we suppose that they are justly deemed breakers of the Covenant, and have justly put themselves out of that Covenant which their Parents made for them.

Ans. 1. The persons in question (i. e. the persons described in the Synods fifth Proposition) do in some degree hold forth their Faith and godly walking, while they are professed Christians, or professed Believers and followers of the Truth and Ways of God, wherein they have been educated from their Infancy; do constantly attend the Ordinances and Worship of God; live under, and do not cast off the Government of Christ in his Church, and when called thereto do readily profess their Assent to the Doctrine of Faith, and Consent to the Covenant: Do these (putting all this together) in no sort shew themselves to be Abrahams Children, by holding forth the Faith of Abraham and walking in his steps, i. e. in Charitable and Ecclesiastical Reputation? Surely Mr. Cotton accounts such as these (yea all the Children of the Faithful that do not grow up to Apostacy and open Scandal, or that are not excommunicable) to continue in a visible Profession of the Covenant, Faith and Religion of their Fathers; as in those passages of his that are pointed to in the Preface to the Late Synod may be seen. And where shall we find ground in all the Scripture to exclude such as these from being within the compass of the visible Church, or the Covenant thereof?

2. If the meaning be, that they do not yet hold forth such an *Experimental work* of Faith, or lively discerning and exercise thereof, and so much of the *Power of Godliness* in their life, as may fit them for a comfortable approach to the Lords Supper: Let it be shewed from the Scripture, that the bare defect or want hereof is such a Violation of the terms of the Covenant, as puts men out of it. We know that every Transgression, or falling short of Duty required in the Covenant, is not accounted in Scripture an absolute Breach of the Covenant (or a forsaking and rejecting thereof) such as for which God gives unto persons or people a Bill of Divorce. Do but compare these persons in question, whom the haity and rigid Severity of Man here pronounces to be justly deemed Breakers of the Covenant, and to have put themselves out of it, with those whom the Holy, but Merciful and Gracious God does in Scripture call and account such Breakers of the Covenant: see Jer. 11. 9, 10. Ezek. 16. 8—59. Deut. 29. 25, 26. 2 Chron. 7. 22. 2 King. 17. 15—20. and he that would not cut down (no not the Barren) Fig trees, till further patience and means were used: he that waited on the Jews (whose entrance into the Church was by a Membership received in Infancy) in the Ministry of Christ and the Apostles, with as clear light of the Gospel as ever shone, till utter incorrigible rejection thereof appeared, before he accounted them broken off, Rom. 11. 16—20. with Act 13. 45, 46. & 18. 5, 6. & 19. 8, 9. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. he that followed Jerusalem with means and dispensations of Grace, till they Sowed him away, Mat. 23. 37, &c. can we imagine that he will reckon our poor Children to be broken off as soon as they are adult, if then presently they do not hold forth fitness for the Lords Table? yea, when many of them are it may be secretly following after God, though haply they have not yet attained so much as to make their approach to that Ordinance comfortable; or have not yet the confidence to put forth themselves thereunto? Surely the Lord does not make so light a matter of his holy Covenant and seal (whatever men through mis-guided apprehensions may do) as to enter into a solemn Covenant with Children, take them into his Church, and seal up their taking in before Men and Angels, and then let them goe out so easily, or drop off one knows not how.

3. If they have justly, i. e. meritoriously put themselves out of the Covenant, or so violated the Covenant on their part, as to deserve a putting out, yet still one might ask, how they come to be *Actually* put out, seeing the Church hath not proceeded, nor seen cause to proceed to any Censure? But if it be indeed so, that they do deserve (i. e. in foro Ecclesiæ, we speak not of desert in the sight of God) to be put out; if they may be justly deemed Breakers of the Covenant, and are guilty of that which justly puts them out, then it is the Churches duty actually to put them out, or cut them off: for Ecclesiastical justice, as well as Civil, reacheth unto all their due and just deserts: and those that are (Ecclesiastically) Breakers of the Covenant ought to be cut off, Gen. 17. 14. Hence it will follow upon these Principles, that we ought to cast out and cut off all the adult Children of our Churches,

Churches that are not come up to full Communion; which thing, how horrid it is to think of, let the Reader judge: or be it that we forbear any formal Censure, and Content our selves only *Doctrinarily* to declare, that all such Children are put out and broken off, (which Doctrinal Declaration is indeed contained in the Assertions of our Brethren) yet the harshness and horrid Severity of such a Declaration, is little inferior to the other, and very contrary to the Patience and Grace of Jesus Christ expressed in the Scriptures.

Preface. Wherefore that all may know, that there is neither Danger nor Singularity in this our Assertion, That a Church-member may possibly become no Member, without any Act of the Church in formal Conjur'ing of him, give us leave to produce some Testimonies to prove it. Judicious and blessed Dr. Ames saith, That in case of pertinacious Separation such persons, though they may be of the Invisible, yet they are not to be accounted Members of the visible Church.

Ans. 1. Suppose you should prove that a Church-member may [Possibly] become no Member without a Censure; yet we are still utterly to seek of Proof that the Children in question do so. 2. How can a Separation be properly pertinacious and incurable, or appear so to be, till the means of Church discipline have been used? 3. Ames his reasoning may be, that such are not to be accounted lawful and approved Members, as in the Title of that Chapter (*De Consc. Lib. 5. Cap. 12.*) he saith, *A Schismatical Church is not to be accounted for a lawful and approved Church.* 4. We shall not deny but that some good Divines do seem to hold, that in some cases of notorious Wickedness and Apostacy, and so in case of absolute and universal Schism (of which Ames there speaks) especially in places and Churches where Discipline is not used; men may be looked at as Non-members, though the Church did neglect to pass a formal Censure: wherein we shall not trouble our selves with being their Opponents. It sufficeth us, that in Churches regularly using Discipline, there is no ordinary way whereby offenders lose Church-membership, but by Excommunication: And that none can lose it while they live, that are not guilty of such evil as is censurable, or is matter of Excommunication; which the persons in question are not.

Another Testimony here alledged, is from Mr. Cotton in his *Way of the Churches*, p. 9. where he saith, that *Many in Churches have cut themselves off.*

Ans. Had the whole sentence been set down, every Reader would have seen the impertinency of the Allegation, as to the Persons and Case in question. Mr. Cottons words are these: *Many in other Churches have cut themselves off from the Covenant by their notorious wickedness and profaneness.* And withall in the same place he adds, that *A relapsed Church, with all the Members of it, are bound to renew their Covenant in order to Reformation:* which shews, that they were not wholly cut off before, though their Membership was but by being born in the Church, and baptized, for of that he there speaks. We doubt not, but among the Members of such Relapsed Churches might be found many much more degenerate; then those described in the *Synods Fifth Proposition*; much less therefore are those Discovenanted, but being in Covenant, are bound to renew it in order to full Communion.

The next Testimony here produced, is from those words in the *Discourse of Church-Covenant*, pag. 17. viz. *That if men had not promised, and also performed in some measure of truth, the duties of Faith and Obedience unto God, they had not taken hold of the Covenant, but had Discovenanted themselves; notwithstanding all the Promises of God unto their Fathers and others. Thus though God promised Abraham to be a God to him, and to his seed in their generations, Gen. 17. yet the Ishmaelites and Edomites descending from Abraham, were Discovenanted by not promising nor performing those duties of Faith and Obedience which God required on the peoples part. Now if this (saith the Apologist) were Truth in the Year 1629. (as it then had the Approbation of the Elders hereabouts) we see no reason why it should not be Truth in the Year 1662. For, Veritas in omnem portem sui semper eadem est. Either this was a Mistake then, or else it is a Truth at this day.*

Ans. Let the words here cited, be candidly interpreted, and they contain nothing repugnant to the present Doctrine of the Synod. For, it is true, that if men do not promise, or do not perform in some measure (yea in some measure of truth, i. e. visibly, and in Characterable and Ecclesiastical reputation) the duties of Faith and Obedience unto God, they do

Discovenant

*Discontinue themselves, i. e. they do it meritoriously, and do what lies in them on their part to destroy their Membership: And they do do it, as will inferre the absolute loss of their Membership, viz. either by formal Excommunication, if you speak of particular persons, and if the Church do her duty; or by the Lords giving them a Bill of Divorce, if you speak of whole Bodies of People, as here the *Ishmaelites* and *Edomites* are spoken of. But what is all this to the Children of our Churches, described in the Synod Fifth Proposition, who do promise, and do in some measure (though not in so full a measure as were to be desired) perform the duties of Faith and Obedience. This might be true in 1639, and in 1662, also. And yet our Attention may be true, and yours false notwithstanding. Let our Children appear to be such as the *Edomites* and *Ishmaelites* were; or let them appear to be such as do in no measure (yea, in no measure of truth, i. e. as to Church-viability, or charitable hope; for the Church can go no further) perform the duties of Faith and Obedience, and we will with you plead, to have them put out of the Church. But till then, i. e. as long as they do in some measure (though yet but in a small and initial measure) perform the Duties, and retain the Essentials of Christianity, or of Faith and Obedience; they continue (yea regularly continue) in the Church, for ought that hath yet appeared, either in 1639. or in 1662. We are loth to take notice of the insulting Excommunications that are here used, which are too-too uncomely; especially there where the fifth Commandment requieth Special Honour: But the intelligent Reader will easily see the vanity of this Condemnation, to bring a Testimony concerning the *Discontinuing* of the *Ishmaelites* and *Edomites*, (for they are expressly intimated in, as the Explication of the not-promising, nor performing the duties of Faith and Obedience intended by the Author) and then to triumph in it, as if that proved the *Discontinuing* of our Hopefull and Non-excommunicable Children, or thwarted the Doctrine of the Synod.*

When it is here added, [*This is the main thing wherein we Dissent from the major part of the Synod*] If by [*This*] be meant the Assertion which is before expressed; viz. that *A Church-member may possibly become no Member, without any act of the Church in formal Censuring of him*: then it is a great and strange misrepresentation to say, that this is the main point of your Dissent. For, there be them that do heartily consent to all the Conclusions of the Synod, and yet do hold, and did in the Synod express as much, That in some notorious cases, and where the Church neglects her duty (as hath been before said) persons may be broken off, and looked at as Non-members, though not formally Censured; or that a Church-member may possibly, in some cases, become no Member, without a formal Censure: The Reader therefore is greatly misled, and mis-informed, when he is told that *This is the main Point of our Dissent*. But when you assert, that the *Children in question are become no Members*, or that persons, who were before Members, do become no Members as soon as ever they are adult, merely by want of fitness for full Communion, though they neither have nor deserve to have any Church-censure paied upon them: This we confess is a main Point wherein you Dissent from the Synod, and (we suppose) from Scripture, and sound Reason too.

Preface. Here let us add the words of Mr. Cotton, in his Excellent Treatise of The Hopfulness of Church members, which are these following: [*Such as are born and baptized Members of the Church, are not expressly continued and confirmed Members, unless when they grow up to years, they do before the Lord and his People profess their Repentance and Faith in Jesus Christ*].

Answer. It is manifest, that by *Confirmed Members*, all along in that Book, Mr. Cotton meant such as are admitted to full Communion, or to the Lords Supper, and Voting; (and so he doth expressly explain himself pag. 9.) and for that, it is well known, we find fully for the same qualifications that Mr. Cotton intendeth according to 11th of Discipline, Chap. 12. Sec. 7. The word [*Continued*] is indeed added in pag. 19. (though not to in pag. 31.) nor that Book; but it is added in a Copulative way [*Continued and Confirmed*] where all the parts must be taken together, to make up the truth of such an Axiome. Besides that, the persons in question do make *some* profession of Faith and Repentance, i. e. in an Initial and Educational way, so as sufficeth to their continuance in the visible Church, though it may not at present suffice to full Communion. Mr. Cotton was farre from conceiving that such non-scantalous persons as are the Subject of our Question are to be cut off

off, or looked upon as cut off from continuance in the Church; as (besides what is cited of his in the Synods Preface) may appear plainly out of this very *Treatise* (which is well called by our Brethren *An Excellent Treatise*) of the Holiness of Church-members; for pag. 3. mentioning a distinction of Mr. Rutherford, That a Church may be termed no Church, no Spoule *jure & merito*, & *quoad vocationem passivam*, in respect of bad deserting, and their not answering to the Call of God, on their parts; and yet the same Church remain de *jure*, for *alteri*, & *quoad vocationem Dei activam*, the Spoule and Bride of Christ: He faith, *This Distinction I can admit, if it be understood of a Church that hath formerly answered the Call of God, and submitted to the Ministry of the Gospel, at least in outward profession of the fundamentals of sound Doctrine, and pure Worship: for such a Church, though they or their children may afterwards degenerate, and go a whoring from God in Doctrine and Worship, yet God in his patience and bounty is not wont so soon to cast off them, as they cast off him.* The next generation after Job, a new a whoring from God, and forsake the Lord God of their fathers, and served Baalim, yet still the Lord accounted them his People, and sent them Judges and Prophets to restore and recover them. And pag 19, 20. he mentions distinctly by way of Confectory from the Proposition here cited by our Brethren, two or three sorts of persons who are not to be continued in the Church. though born and baptized in it; viz. 1. The grossly Ignorant of the first Principles and Foundations of Religion. 2. Persons notoriously scandalous for any gross crime, as Idolatry, Adultery, &c. but not a word of such an intercession as our Brethren seem to make, viz. the discontinuance or unchurching of such a sort of persons as are the Subject of our Question. And it is observable all along in that Book, that he pleads not for the un-membering of any that are once in the Church, yea though they came in but by a Membership received in Infancy (for of such he often expressly speaks. and such were the Members of those Churches he disputes upon in Answer to his Opponents) but onely such as are scandalous and wicked, and deserve Excommunication, and he would have them also un-membered by Excommunication, and not by a Self-jelony onely: See pag 8, 15, 28, 32, 56, 57, 60.

Preface. Renowned Parker, speaking of the interpretation of those words [Laying on of Hands] in Heb. 6.2. cites many judicious Writers, whose judgement he expresseth in words to this purpose; That they who were baptized in minority, when they are grown up, after that the Church had approved their faith by the Symbol of Inposition of Hands: they were admitted Members of the Church: this was according to sound Doctrine in the Primitive times (as Parker saith.) Now we demand, how they can be admitted as Members who are already as complete, and perfect Members as any in the Church? But the Ancient Doctrine was, That children who were baptized in minority, after they shall come to profess their faith so as to be accepted of the Church, may be admitted as Members: Therefore according to the Ancient Doctrine, such children are not as complete and perfect Members as any in the Church.

Answer. Whether the words [*Tantum membra Admittuntur*] be Parkers own words or Calvins (for he speaks as if he cited only Calvins words; yet we finde not those expressions used by Calvin either on Heb. 6.2. or in his Institutions, *De Confirmatione*, though in both places is the substance of the thing which Parker alledgeth from him) the matter is not great. It is manifest from the whole discourse, that Parker is there speaking of such as are admitted to full communion, as we call it. If he there used the term [Members] for Persons admitted to the Lords Table, and to all Church-privileges, it is no harder phrase, then hath been used in this Country for many years, yet that argues not that he do, or that Parker did think Children to be no members before. It is observed of the Ancients, that they spake more securely before the Rise of Pelagius; men are less curious in Expression, when they speak about Points of which no Controversie is moved, and where their judgements are otherwise sufficiently known. As what is more abundantly and universally agreed on among all our Divines, then this, that The Children of Believers are Members of the Church, or a part of it? Parker, within six Lines of the place cited, calls them [*In Ecclesia nati*] Born in the Church; and opposeth them to [Extranei] i.e. to such as are without. Dr. Ames gives it as the Doctrine of the Protestants, The Infants of the faithful, unless they were to be accounted Members of the Church, they can not to be baptized. Ursinus and Pareus say, Onesimus, Joli, &c. All and onely those are to be baptized by Christs Command, who are his Disciples (Mat. 28. 19.) i. e. those that are, and are to be accounted

accounted Members of the visible Church, whether they be adult persons professing Faith and Repentance, or Infants born in the Church. Again, The Infants of Christians do as well as the adult belong to the Covenant and Church of God, and are therefore to be baptized, because the whole Church ought to be baptized. *Catechet. Explicat. pag. 367.* This I run is jointly acknowledged by the Protestant and Reformed Churches, as appears in the *Hymn of their Confession*; The Children of the faithful are God's peculiar people and in the Church of God, *Reformation Catechism, pag. 337.* Reckoned in the number of God's people, (Bohemian Catechism, pag. 399.) God doth together with the Parents account their posterity also to be of the Church, *Prædic. Catechism, pag. 401.* They condemn the Anabaptists, who hold that Infants be not within the Church of God, (Confession of Auzpurg, pag. 401.) Infants belonging to the Covenant and Church of God, as well as the adult, saith the Palmarie Catechism, *Quest. 74.*

Now it being so, that it is the manifest Doctrine of all our Divines, that Children are Members of the Church; and neither did they imagine, that when adult they drop off by a Self-jelony; nor we know not how: For when *Erasmus* had said, that *Chilren bei ggroren u. ij. ike*, being asked, would not it be to what had been promised in their behalf, they were to be left to themselves: Calvin dotheth it as the saying of a man not well exercised in Church-government. (h) See also *Commun. Exam. Conc. Trid. par. 2. de Baptis. Can. 14. & de Confirmat. sub Can. 3.* whose words in the former of these places, the Reader may find Enlarged in the beginning of Mr. *Seper's Treatise* about the Church-membership of *Chilren*. I lately Printed, And *Carrivright* to it at question, *What are the Duties of the rest of the Church*, that are present at a Child's Baptism? Answers, 1. To Rejoyce and be glad at the increase of Gods Church. — 3. When the Child cometh to age to do such duties as one Member oweth to another: he did not think it's Membership ceased with Infancy, but (saith he) when it cometh to age, such duties are to be do'd to it as one Member oweth to another. Hence we say, it is rational so to understand *Parker* or *Calvin*, as if they did think (or approved it as sound Doctrine in others to think) that they who were Baptized in minority, when after they are grown up, they have approved their Faith, they are then first admitted Members, as if they were no Members of the Church before: as the Reader would think that that were the scope and sense of the Testimony here cited. But to cite several passages in *Authors* in a sense contrary to those *Authors* known and declared judgement, is very injurious both to them and to the Reader. He that reads what this Preface here saith, would think that it is the Judgement of many judicious Writers cited by *Parker*, that Children do then first enter into Church-membership when their Faith is approved by the Church, after they are grown up, and that they are not Members at all before that: when as it is most certain, and evident, that neither *Parker*, nor any judicious Writer cited by him, nor any one heretofore approved for a judicious Writer, either Ancient or Modern, did indeed so judge, but the contrary. And *Parker's* words are clearly intended in another sense, viz. with reference to full Communion. And so speaking of the very same matter in the first book of his *Ecclesiast. Instit. Cap. 10.* he saith, That in the Reformed Churches the adult are examined by the Presbytery, approved by the consent of the People, and received by the whole Church as Members of the Communion in a special manner, and so are as it were confirmed before they be admitted to the Lords Supper; where [Members of their Communion in a special manner] is the same with [Members in full Communion] in our Language: and so in words, together with the known practice of the Reformed Churches, do plainly confirm our distinction between Initiated Members and Members in full Communion; but they are far from intending or holding forth either a denial of Childrens membership, or a cessation thereof as soon as they become adult.

As for the Inference that is here made from *Parker's* Testimony; Therefore according to the Ancient Doctrine such Children are not as complete and perfect Members as any in the Church.

Ans. If his words do hold in the sense in which they are here alledged, then Children are not only not as complete and perfect Members as any in the Church, but they are not Members at all, or Non-members, seeing they are not (it seems) admitted Members, till when adult they have made their Profession. As for their being complete and perfect Members, its well known we say and hold that they are not complete or perfect in point of Communion, or Privilege, but only in regard of the Essence or Relation of Membership.

(h) Calvin O-
piscat pag. 346.

Carrivright Ca-
tech. pag. 185.

1. e. they are properly and completely within the Church, and not half in, and half out. To be (according to divine Institution) *within the Church*, is to be a *Member of the Church*, as the Book (before which this Preface is set) well owns, pag. 41. and let any man show us one Orthodox Living, or judicious Writer, before or in *larger* days, that ever said that the Children of the Faithful are (either while Infants, or when adult, supposing them not excommunicate nor deserving to be) *not within the Church*. But without we hold, and so did *Larker*, and the *Reformed Churches*, that there are many *within the Church*, who may not have complete or full communion in all the Privileges thereof, and so are not complete or perfect Members in that sense, and *Sancti Medani. Lib. 1. Cap. 32. Thej. 13.* It is not we but you, that will have Children (at least all adult Children) to be as complete, and perfect Members (in this sense) as any in the Church, or else to be no Members at all, seeing you acknowledge none that are adult to be Members unless they be in full Communion.

It is further added; *That when they are adult, in case they do not join unto the Church, then they do not retain their Membership which they have in Minority.* Now to join to the Church is the act of one that is not joined, or is not a Member; so that unless they are themselves to be *not Members* (or unless they own themselves to have lost their Membership) they do not *retain* their Membership; so this we contend we do not understand. But so much for the discourse upon the third Objection.

In the Answer to the fourth Objection, there is an high Profession of much zeal for Church care and Watch to be extended toward Children, and much clearness therein (even as the Light at Noon, and as if it were written with the beams of the Sun) so as that the Reader would expect to find very ample satisfaction in that matter; but when it comes to, it falls flat to no more but this; *That the watch over them is to be mediate according to the state of their Membership: the Church is to see that the Parents do their duty toward their Children.*

Now we demand whether this be any more than the Church should extend to a Negro, or Indian living in the Family of one of their brethren, for should they not see that he do his duty toward him, and that in reference to the things of Religion? yea, we might further ask whether this mediate watch (viz. by seeing that the Parents do their duty) doth not belong as much to Children when they are *rejected and disjunct* by the Church, as our Brethren would have them? And what shall become of Children when their Parents are *dead* (as how many Fatherless and Motherless Children are among us?) or *farre removed*, and when Children are *just Juris*, and not under the wings of their Parents? and why also should not *Baptism* and *Catechizing* (as well as other Church-benefits) be dispensed *only mediately* and not immediately unto Children? The Reader may here see that the difference about *mediate and immediate Membership* is more than a notion, it contains under it a thing of great moment. This *mediate Membership* is made a medium to put our poor Children from under the Government of Christ, and to let them (in their own persons) as *Lambs in a large place*. For by this the Church hath nothing to do with them, nor can put forth any act (either of Watch or Censure) *immediately upon them*, but upon their Parents only. But that Church-watch, Government, and Discipline is to be extended and admitted to our Children personally and immediately (i. e. according as in regard of age, and understanding they are capable there of; viz. Instruction and Inspection, and that in an official way, even in younger years, and formal Censures when adult, if they fall into such offences as demand and deserve the same) the Reader may understand in the *Swiss Arguments*, and in the following *Defence* thereof (k). Reply the Assertion hereabout is *mediate Church-care*, is *stated* under that clause [*These Children that are in Minority.*] Bat. 1. Much help (by Instructions, Counsels, Warnings, Reproofs, Exhortations, &c.) and that in an Authoritative way, and upon the account of their Membership Relation, may be administered unto Children themselves immediately in their own persons (besides looking to Parents that they do their duties to them) even while they are in their Minority, though not yet capable of publick Censures. 2. They are in the same state and Relation to the Church (though not of the same capacity) when in minority and when adult: If therefore (not because of their natural incapacity, but) because of the nature of their Membership, only mediate, and no Immediate Church-

(k) *Disciplina
subiunct omnia
in Unitate Fra-
trum bohem. ru. a.
ob Injuncta ujs. ad
senem. Rat. Disci-
plin. pag. 71.*

Church-care, Watch and Government belong to them, while in minority, neither doth it belong to them when adult : and therefore this notion excludes all our Children, both younger and elder from being under any Church-government immediately in their own persons. So that let them run on in never such vile courses, the Church cannot deal with them but with their Parents onely; and yet the case may often so be, that the Parents are neither blameable for their miseries, nor able to reform the same.

But as mediocras their Number it is, here is somewhat added, that shall touch these adult Children themselves; and what is that? Why, *If when they shall be adult they do not bring forth fruits of Repentance, and Faith, then the Church is to disown them, as having no part in the Lord.*

Ans. 1. Is this according to the Spirit of Christ, or like the Lords proceeding with his Covenant-people in the Scripture, presently to disown them, and cast them off, if some evil fruits, nay if want of good fruits be found in them, then at first they to call them *Lambs*, and tell them *they have no part in the Lord*? Hath the Lord vouchsafed to take these persons into his glorious Covenant, and to seal it to them in Baptism before Men and Angels; and doth it come but to this? that if poor Children, as soon as the day of ripe understanding dawns upon them, do not bring forth like fruits of Faith and Repentance, yea such fruits as may fit them for full Communion, they are then presently declared to be Discovenanted, and to be turned, drift as those who have no part in the Lord? It is true, the most hopeful Child, yea the best of us all, might justly be Discovenanted by the Lord, should he strictly mark what is amiss, and deal according to our deserts, but he is graciously pleased not to proceed with such severity, but with much patience and long suffering towards those whom he once takes into Covenant. And who or what is man, that he should be more holy than the Lord? Let but that one Scripture be looked upon (among many others) touching the Barren Fig-tree, which is here cited, as if it gave some countenance to this present Disowning, in case of barrenness. The Lord comes in the time and season of fruit, and finds none, and yet he waits another year after that, and a third after that (i.e. a long time, and with great demonstration of patience) before he speaks of cutting it down; and then the Vine-dresser (acted therein by the Spirit of God) cries (not Cut it down presently, but) *Lord, let it alone one year more* (i.e. till it appear utterly hopeless, and incurable) *that I may dig about it, and dung it*: He chooseth rather to make it a subject of Labour and Culture, then to cast himself by riding his hands of it. Also that *Parable* points to the People of the Jews, to and among whom Christ preached: Now the following story of the New Testament tells us, that Christ and his Apostles waited on them, till they appeared altogether incurable and incorrigible, and till their incurable Barrenness discovered it self by positive fruits of wicked opposing and rejecting the Gospel before they were cut down, or broken off: And the Apostles when they preached to the Adults, and yet impenitent Jews, did not tell them they had no part in the Lord, but on the contrary expressly told them, they had a part in the Lord, and in his Covenant-dispensations, and urged that as an Argument to exhort them to repent and believe, though they had not yet done it, *Acts 3. 19. 25, 26. Acts 13. 26, 26.* They were farre from being an occasion of making them cease from fearing the Lord, by telling them they had no part in him.

2. Suppose any of these Children when adult do bring forth some fruits of Faith and Repentance, (as those described in the Synods fifth Proposition, can hardly be denied in charitable reputation to do) though not so full and ripe fruits as were to be desired, and haply not such, as themselves do finde encouragement to approach to the Lords Table; what shall be done to these? Shall they be *Orned*, or *Disowned*? are they *In the Church*, or *Out*? If *In*, why is Baptism denied to their Children? If *Out*, how come they so to be? or where doth God in his Word say, or allow us to say to such hopeful young men and women, as through grace many of our Children are (though not yet in full Communion) *That they have no part in the Lord*?

3. What is this *Disowning*? and where shall we have Scripture-warrant for such a Church-disowning as is not Excommunication? for That, our Brethren see not warrant to proceed unto; but lay down this Rule [*The Church is to disown them, as having no part in the Lord*] If any man speak (especially if he speak Rules according to which the Church is to practise) *let him speak as the Oracles of God.* It were needful that this dis-

owning.

owning (contradistinguished to Excommunication) should be cleared from thence. *Admonition* and *Excommunication* we hear plainly of in the Scripture, and in Orthodox Divinity; but a *Disowning*, that is a kind of public Church-censure, and yet is neither *Admonition*, nor *Excommunication*, this seems to be a new invented piece of Discipline. We demand, whether this *Disowning* be not a putting one out of the Church, that was before in it? If so, what is it but *Excommunication*, which the Apostle expreth by that [Put away from among you, 1 Cor. 5. 13.] if not, is it not a vain thing? The person whom you are about to Disown is either *within* the Church, or *without*; a *Member*, or not a *Member*. (1) If he be *within*, why may you not judge and censure him with the Censure of cutting off, or casting out, i. e. *Excommunication* (1 Cor. 5. 12, 13.) there being cause for it? If he be *without*, why should you *disown* him, any more than you do *Non-members*, or such as were never joyned to the Church? Would it not seem a strange and vain thing, if the Church should put forth a solemn publick Act to disown a company of Non-members that are without the Church? to what purpose should this be? How Acts 8. 21. here cited in the Margin, should make for this *disowning*, we understand not. Peter there tells *Simon Magus*, that he was farre from having any part or lot in the matter of conferring the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, which he never had, but ambitiously aspired after; but doth not declare that he had Discovenanted himself, or had lost his Membership which he once had. And whatever became of *Simon Magus* afterward (of which the Scripture is silent, and stories uncertain) there is no ground to think, that he was then put out of the Church, or lost his Membership. But rather the Apostle (by grave Apostolical Rebuke and Counsel) applies himself to him, as to one in the Church, to bring him to Repentance, and to that sincerity of grace, which he yet wanted, Verse 22, 23.

As for the Reason here rendered, why *Excommunication* agrees not to the Children in

Catabaptiste docent non posse Excommunicationem in Ecclesiam reduci, nisi baptizentur qui Sci- entes jugo Christi Collum submit- tant. Bucer in Joh. fol. 25.

See Mr. Cotton expressly holding forth *Excommunication* to be applicable to such as the Children in question, in *Helines of Church-members*, pag. 57.

question, viz. because it is applicable to none but those who have been in full Communion. This is but a begging of the Question, and carrieth not Evidence of Truth with it. For *Excommunication* (i. e. the utmost Censure, so called) doth not properly or nextly debarre or exclude from full Communion, but it cutteth off from Membership (rendreth a person as an Heathen and Publican, Mat. 18. 17.) and so from that Communion that belongeth to a Member as such. When a person that hath stood for some time *Abanished*, is afterward, for his contumacy, excommunicated, it is not *Excommunication* that doth immediately and properly put him out of full Communion, for that was done by *Admonition*; whereby, being Ecclesiastically unclean, he was justly suspended from eating of the Holy things: but *Excommunication* cuts him off from Membership, which *Admonition* did not. Hence it is not full Communion, but Membership that doth properly, and formally render a person a Subject capable of *Excommunication*: Hence it agrees to all that are Members though they have not been in full Communion; and every Member hath some Communion though not full Communion, and therefore may be excommunicated. Paul when he is speaking of the Churches judicial proceeding, and that unto *Excommunication*, makes it applicable to all that are *within*, 1 Cor. 5. 12. if in full Communion, yet Church-judgement falls upon them not as in full Communion, but as *within*. The casting out of Cain and Ishmael, the cutting off of the born Members of the Church of Israel from their People (an exprellion often used) the casting out of the children of the Kingdom, Mat. 8. 12. do at least by consequence, and by proportion, and parity of Reason, shew that the Children in question may be cast out, and cut off from the Church by the Censure of *Excommunication*.

As for that term of [Formal] *Excommunication*, we know not that we are limited to this or that precise form of words, in *Excommunicating* one sort or other; but the formal nature of the thing (viz. a putting of one out of the Church that was before in it) This well agrees to the persons in question.

We pass by the fifth and last *Objection* (which chargeth our Dissenting Brethren with *Weakness*, *Ignorance*, &c.) as containing nothing that is *Argumentative* to the matter in hand. Neither do we own the *Objection*, unless it be against our selves, who are (as we have

(1) *Contradistinctio caret simpliciter omni medio.* Keck. Log. pag. 181. Hooker's Survey, pag. 17.

have acknowledged in our Preface to the Synods conclusions) *poor, feeble, frail men*, desiring not to truit unto, or boast of any strength of our own (which is none at all) but only to the strength and grace of Jesus Christ, withall acknowledging that grace of his, whereby he doth vouchsafe sometimes to reveal his Truth unto *Sabes*. We tender onely *Scriptures and Scripture-arguments*, for that which we maintaine, desiring that they may be impartially considered, without challenging to our selves, or pleading for the Reputation of Strength or Wildome. In Disputes of this nature, it is impossible but that each part should look upon the Arguments on either hand, as *strong or weak*, according as they are perswaded. But can we not deal with *Arguments*, without being supposed to reflect upon the *Persons* each of other? We suppose you do not see sufficient strength in our Arguments (for then you would judge as we do) and in that sense you do impute weakness to them. In the like sense do we unto yours, but desire to do it without any harsh reflexions upon the Persons of our Brethren, and without listings up in our selves, who have cause enough to lye in the dust before God and man.

But here our Brethren take occasion to set down the *Reasons* of their *Dissent* from the *Synod*: which make up a second main Part of this *Preface*. The Consideration whereof we shall now address our selves unto.

Reason 1. *The Synod did acknowledge, That there ought to be true saving Faith in the Parents, according to the judgement of rational Charity, or else the Child ought not to be baptized. But they would not let this (which themselves acknowledged) be set down, though our Unity lay at the stake for it.*

Answe. The regular receiver of the Truth, is one that divides the Hoof, as well as chews the Cud; one that doth not take all in a Lump, but distinguishes, and rightly divides between things that differ. We are to distinguish here,

1. Between Faith in the being or first beginning of it, whereby one is, or is reputed to be in the state of a Believer, the charitable judgement whereof runs upon a great Latitude; and Faith in the special exercise of it, whereby one is fit for that special Communion with, and active Fruition of Christ, which is the scope of the Lords Supper: unto the visible discovery whereof, more lively Fruits, and more experienced Operations of Faith are requisite.

2. Distinguishing between the internal Grace it self, which is required of them that partake of Sacraments in the sight of God; and those external signs of that Grace which the Church is to proceed upon in her Admission of persons unto Sacraments. These two Distinctions being attended, and rightly applied, will help to clear both the Truth it self in this matter from mistakes, and the Proceedings of the Synod from those uncomfortable Reflexions that are here cast upon them.

The former of these Distinctions, and the application thereof to the matter in hand, we have in Dr. Ames; (a) *Children (saith he) are not to be admitted to partake of all Church-privileges, until first increase of Faith do appear, but from those which belong to the beginning of Faith, and entrance into the Church, they are not to be excluded. Where the Doctor distinguisheth between (Initium Fidei) The beginning of Faith; and (Incrementum Fidei) The increase or growth of Faith, and makes the former to suffice unto Baptism, but the latter to be requisite to full Communion, or to the Lords Supper. An initial Faith entitleth to the Seal of Initiation, but a grown Faith (i.e. a Faith of some growth, though yet farre short of Perfection, and needing to grow itill) a Faith growing up unto some sensible and lively exercise, is requisite unto the Sacrament of growth and fruition. They were Believers, yet but initial Believers that John baptized, in the first dawning or beginning of the Gospel, Mark 1.1.—4. The Apostles constantly baptized persons upon the first beginning of their Christianity, but the Lords Supper followed after, as annexed to some progress in Christianity.*

The latter Distinction also is obvious and necessary. *Who ought to come, and, Who ought to be admitted,* are two distinct Questions, say *Ursin*, and (c) *Farwe*. We grant that true saving Faith and Repentance is required by God of those that partake of Sacraments for themselves, or for their Children: But the Question is, what are the external signs and tokens of that Grace, which an Ecclesiastical charitable Reputation may proceed upon; for we can go no further then the judgement of rational charity (as here our Brethren acknowledge) and that proceeds upon outward probable signs, leaving the infallible know-

(a) *Medul. Lib. 1. Cap. 32. Theol. 13. And see Cap. 40. Theol. 6, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18. And M. Shepards late Printed Letter, pag. 16, 17.*

(c) *Catech. Ex-luc. in quaest. 81. p. 64. 26.*

ledge of the heart to God only. The distinction between a *Jew outwardly*, or a visible Jew that hath *praise* of (or approbation among) men, and a *Jew inwardly* that hath *praise* of God, is a Scripture distinction, *Rom. 2. 28, 29.* and is necessary to be attended here; for, *De occultis non judicat Ecclesia*, 1 Cor. 4. 5. And here also we conceive, that the same *strictness*, as to outward things, is not necessary unto a charitable probable judgement or hope of the being of Faith, or of that *initial* Faith that entitleth to Baptism, as is unto the like judgement of the *special* exercise of Faith that is requisite to the Lords Supper; there be many things that do both really, and in the just reputation of men, hinder the exercise of Grace, and so hinder from the Lords Supper, which yet do not take away a charitable hope of the being of Grace, or the state of a Believer. If a man be under Offence in the Church, he is suspended from the Lords Supper (till a renewing or exercise of Repentance do appear) yet we still repute him to be in the state of a Believer, or to have the being of Grace.

Now then to apply this to the Synod's proceedings, for Answer to what is here said, viz. [That the Synod did acknowledge there ought to be true saving Faith in the Parent to the judgement of rational Charity, or else the Child ought not to be Baptized; yet could not be prevailed with to set this down as a Conclusion.]

1. We did and do acknowledge, that in Ecclesiastical Charitable Reputation, there must be Faith; (yet true saving Faith; those words hurt us not, provided they be not, so strained, as to turn Charity into Rigid Severity) i. e. the being of Faith whereby a person is accounted to be in the state of a Believer (Baptism being, as was in the Synod alledged, annexed properly to the state of a Believer, or to the Covenant-stake of a person, and not to the present act or exercise of Faith; and hence though there be no Parent alive to act for the Child, and the Child cannot at present act for itself, yet that hinders not his Baptism;) but we did not acknowledge, it was necessary there should be Faith in the lively and special exercise of it, such as we justly require an appearance of unto rational Charity, in order unto full Communion, which is that our Brethren sit at, and stand for, in all whole Children they will have Baptized. And so set down a conclusion in general terms, when the nature of the case calls for *distinctness*, is not rational.

2. Our main Work was to consider of, and pitch upon such external Signs and Characters, as the Churches Charity might and should proceed upon in this case. We all own, that only visible Believers, or visible Saints, are to have their Children Baptized; but the Question is, *Who are to be accounted visible Believers?* and we say that those described in the fifth Proposition, are of that number. To have put it in such a general term, as [*Those that profess, or hold forth Faith and Repentance unto the satisfaction of rational Charity*] had been to leave the matter as obscure as we found it, and in stead of giving light to the Churches (which is the end of Synods) to leave them in the dark without any help to discover their way: for still they are to seek, who those are that are to be accounted Professors of Faith and Repentance, and what Profession that is, that Charity may accept in order to their Childrens Baptism. Besides, it is well known, that those expressions [*Holding forth Faith and Repentance, &c.*] have been constantly to taken in this Country, as to hold forth the qualifications required for full Communion: and that was it which our Brethren strove for, so to screw up the Expressions for Baptism, as that all that have their Children Baptized must unavoidably be brought to the Lords Table, and to a power of Voting in our Churches, wherein we cannot consent to them; and however we are charged with corrupting the Churches, yet we believe time will shew that that Principle that over-enslaved full Communion, or that will have all of whom we can have any hope that they have any good in them, to come to the Lords Table; it is (we say) will prove a Church-corrupting Principle, and those that have laboured to keep up the p^ritition here, will be found to have been seriously Studios of the Purity and Safety of the Churches.

3. But when it is said, that the Synod could not be brought to express what themselves acknowledge, viz. that the Parent whose Child is baptized must have Faith to the judgement of Charity, or (which is all one) must be a visible Believer; we desire it may be considered with what Truth this can be said: for it was offered again and again, to express it more plainly, and particularly, if that would have finished, as those that were present or whose agitations (too long here to be inserted) may remember, and the Proposition made was refused.

refused by some of themselves that dissent; but it is competently expressed in the *Synod's Reply*, as now Printed; for when we limit the Baptizable to *consecrate visible Believers*, and their *Infant-yeel*, in *Propos. 1. & 2.* and then say, that those described in *Propos. 5, 6, & 7.* are to have their Children Baptized, doth it not imply, that the Parents there described are *consecrate visible Believers*, unless you will make us to speak inconsistentencies? Again, it is expressly made one Argument to prove the *fifth Proposition*, that *The Parents there described are Consecrate visible Believers.* And do we not then express it, that the Parent whose Child is to be Baptized must be a Consecrate visible Believer; and is not that all one, as to have true Faith in the judgement or Charity? How then is it here said, that the Synod would not let this which themselves acknowledged, be expressed, *though our Unity lay at the stake for it?* surely such misrepresentation of things with so much injurious refection would be forbore by Godly Brethren. If that would have *United us*, to own that the Parent must be a *visible Believer*, it was owned, and granted *toties quoties*, and is contained in the Propositions and Arguments, as any *Intelligent Reader* will easily see. But the disagreement lay here, that your selves would not consent to any such *acceptation*, or to any such *Characters or Expressions* of a visible Believer, but such as should unavoidably bring Him into full Communion. And we differed about this, *Who are visible Believers?* Not whether the Parents that have Baptism for their Children *must be such.* In sum, the Reason of our disagreement, was not because we would not own our own Principle (as is here strangely represented) but because we could not *Consent to yours*, and because you refused to have a common Principle any way expressed but so as might suit with your own Notion, though our Unity lay at the stake for it.

Reason 2. The second Reason which our Brethren here give of their dissent from the Synod, stands thus;

There is no warrant in all the Scripture, to apply the Seal of Baptism unto those Children, whose Parents are in a state of unfitness for the Lords Supper. But the Parents in question are in a state of unfitness for the Lords Supper; therefore there is no warrant in all the Scripture to Baptize their Children: this we suppose is the *Assumption*, and *Conclusion* that is understood, if this *second Reason* be intended as a Reason of their dissent from the Synod's *fifth Proposition*. Unless it be intended only as a dissent from that which is quoted and contained in the Synod's Discourse, viz. that *Some may have their Children Baptized, who yet are short of actual fitness for the Lords Supper*: But the Answer to it will take in both. And the Answer will easily be given, if once we understand distinctly what is meant by [*A state of unfitness*] for the Lords Supper: now by a *state of unfitness*, must be meant either *Non-membership*, and that is indeed a *state of unfitness* for the Lords Supper, which belongs only to the Church, (though not to all in the Church, yet only to it) and in this sense the *Assumption* above mentioned is denied; for the Parents in question are *Members of the Church*, and in that respect in a *state of fitness* for the Lords Supper: i. e. being in the Church (or Members thereof) to them *belong* all Church-privileges, according as they shall be capable thereof, and appear *likely qualified* for the same; they have *jus ad rem*, though not *jus in re*, as a Child hath a right to all his Fathers Estate, though he may not (ought not to) have the *actual use and fruition* of it, till he become to years, and be qualified with abilities to manage it. A *Free-man* is in a state of fitness to be a *Magistrate or Deputy*, (or in some other office proper to Freemen) though for want of Particular qualifications, or orderly admission by Election, he may haply never be ore. In such a sense every Church-member is in a *state of fitness* for the Lords Supper.

Or else by [*A state of unfitness for the Lords Supper*] is meant [*Want of actual qualifications fitting*] for it, where by a person either is in himself *short of actual fitness* for the Lords Table, or wanteth *Church approbation* of his fitness, and so wanteth an orderly admission thereunto. Now in this sense we deny the *Major* (or *Proposition*) of the Argument above mentioned, and do conceive that there is warrant to be found in Scripture for the applying of Baptism to Children, whose Parents do want actual qualifications fitting them for the Lords Supper. Among sundry other Scripture evidences of it, one is from the Analogy of the Passover, and Circumcision in the Church of Israel, where the Parent might want a *real fitness* for the Passover, by manifold Ceremonial uncleannesses, and yet that hindered not the Circumcising of the Child.

Now a liberty of arguing from thence to the *Gospel passover*, and *Gospel-circumcision* (i. e. to the Lords Supper and Baptism) is here granted and allowed : but 'tis Answered, that *Unleſs* the Father were in a state of *piety* for the *Passover*, he was not fit to have his *Childe* circumcised.

Reply. What state of fitness was the *unclean Jewish Parent* in, but only a state of *membership* ? He was a Member of the Church, and so are the Parents in question ; and they need not, do not enter into a new *Membership* when they are admitted to the Lords Table, no more then the *Jewish Parent* after his cleansing did. But in two things the case of the Ceremonially-unclean Jewish Parent, holds proportion with the case in hand.

1. He must have *other*, and *better* qualifications then he hath at present, before he eat of the *Passover* ; he is at present in a state of *Legal impurity* (and so, in regard of actual qualifications, in a state of *unfitness*) but he must be in a state of *Legal purity* and cleanliness, before he partake of the holy things.

2. He must (especially after some uncleannesses of a more remarkable nature) be *judged and pronounced* by the *Priest* to be clean, and so free to partake of the holy things, *Levit. 13. 6.* So the Parents in question must have their fitness for the Lords Table *judged of*, and *approved* by those in the Church, to whom the power of such judgement and approbation doth belong : And having these two things (*Personal qualifications, and Church-approbation*) then (and not before) they are to come to the Lords Table ; and those two are all they need : they do not need a new admittance into Membership (as if they were before not of the Church) no more then the *Israelitish Parent* did. If any one object, that this *Legal uncleanness* was but an *accidental and ceremonial* thing, and did not import the want of any *Moral or Essential* fitness for the *Passover* : Let him consider, That as the *Discipline* then was mostly *Ceremonial* (2), and hence *Legal purity* was then an *essential* qualification unto a *regular fitness* for the *Passover*, and other holy things, and the want of it a *real* barre ; so those *Ceremonies* pointed unto *Moral and Spiritual* things to be attended by us now. Their *Legal cleansings, washings, &c.* did import, and signify a *special exercise of Faith and Repentance* ; which therefore we may well require in those whom we admit unto full Communion in the holy things of the *Gospel* ; yet the *present defect* hercof doth not put the Parent out of the Church, nor exclude his Children from *Membership*, or from the *Initiatory Seal* of it, no more then a like defect did then. We might also minde the case of one that hath been in full Communion, but falling into *Offence* is under publick *Admonition* for it ; Is not he in a state of *unfitness* (taking it for want of actual fitting qualifications) for the *Lords Supper* ? yet this will not debarre his *Childe* from *Baptism*, because he is not yet cut off from Membership. Neither doth his having once been in full Communion alter the case, or render him more [in a state of fitness] then the Parent in question is ; for the one is a Member as well and as truly as the other : and to be *declined*, and *fallen off* from *Supper-qualifications*, and debarred from the Lords Table for open *Offence*, is worse then for a young man simply not to have attained thereunto (it is, at least, *Ecclesiastically* worse. We speak not of what the inward state before God may be ; but that it is worse in *foro Ecclesia*, appears, because the Church hath had and seen cause to dispense a publick *Censure* in the one case, but not in the other) Now if a person may retain his Membership, and so derive *Baptism-right* to his Children, notwithstanding his personal *unfitness* for the Lords Supper in the former case, why not as well, nay much more in the latter ?

But let it seriously be considered whether there be any warrant in all the Scripture to make the *baptizing* of the *Childe* to depend upon the Parents *actual fitness* for, or admision to the Lords Supper (e). What fitness for the *Lords Supper* had those that were baptized by *John Baptist*, and by *Christ* Disciples at his appointment in the beginning of his publick Ministry ? What fitness had the *Taylor*, when himself and all his were baptized after an *hours* instruction ; wherein (probably) he had not so much as heard any thing of the Lords Supper ? The teaching of which followed after *Discipling* and *Baptizing*, as is hinted by that order in *Matth. 28. 19. 20.* and by the ancient practice of not teaching the *Catechumens* any thing about the Lords Supper till after they were baptized ; as is witnessed by *Haguer* of *Confirmation*, pag. 13, 14. *Albani* nam apud *Baxter* of *Confirmation*, pag. 132.

We :

(a) *Amer Medul.*
Lib. 1. cap. 38.
2 Es. 41.

(e) The Scripture order is to make the circumcising of the child part of the Parents fitness for the *Passover*, and for admision thereunto [Let all his Males be circumcised, and then let him come in and keep it] *Exod. 12. 48.* rather then to make his admision to the *Passover* a pre-requisite to the child's Circumcision.

We constantly read in the story of the *Acts* that persons were baptized immediately upon their first entrance into *Membership*, but we never read that they did immediately upon their first *Membership* receive the Lords Supper, which strongly argues that *Membership*, and Baptism the Seal thereof, is separable even in the adult from full Communion. And that a man may have his Children baptized (as the *Taylor*, and others had) and yet not presently come (but need further instruction and preparation before he come) to the Lords Supper. So there is Baptism from being inseparable from immediate admission to the Lords Supper, that we read of no one, (no not of the adult) in all the New Testament that was admitted to the Lords Supper immediately upon his Baptism, from the first Baptism of John, to the end of the *Acts* of the Apostles. There is but one place that sounds as if it were quickly after, viz. *Acts* 2. 41, 42, which is here alledged by our Brethren: But to that; 1. There is no word about the Lords Supper in *Peters* Sermon, the Heads whereof are in that Chapter set down, though there is somewhat of the other Sacrament of Baptism, ver. 38. and upon glad receiving. His word they were baptized immediately, ver. 41. 2. Hence there must be some time afterward for instructing them in the doctrine and use of the Lords Supper (as *Paul* had some time for that at *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 23, with *Acts* 18. 11.) before their admission thereunto, or participation thereof; and so much is intimated in the Text, when its said, They (after their being added, and baptized) continued in (or gave sedulous attendance to) the Apostles [*Doctrine*] first, and then [*Breaking of Bread*]. There was some time of gaining further acquaintance with Christ, and with his Ways and Ordinances (and with this in special) by the Apostles *Doctrine and Instructions*, between their baptizing, and their participation of the Supper: some time (we say) more or less, and that that was attained in a very little time then under those plentiful pourings forth of the Spirit, requires usually a much longer time now in ordinary Dispensation.

The Preface proceeds to strengthen their second Reason by Testimonies; and the Assertion which they seem to intend the Proof of by these Testimonies, is a very strange one; viz. this: [*Neither do we read that in the Primitive times Baptism was of a greater Latitude, as to the Subject thereof, than the Lords Supper, but the contrary*]. These words, as they are here set down, do speak as if in the Primitive times Baptism was not extended unto Infants; or at least no more, nor sooner than the Lords Supper was given unto them (which is here presently well acknowledged to have been a grievous Error). Well might the *Anabaptist* triumph if this could be proved, which indeed never was, nor can be: But we are willing to believe that our Brethrens meaning is (though it be not so expressed) that the Subject of Baptism in Ancient times was not of a greater Latitude [as to the Adult] than the Lords Supper, i. e. that no adult persons might have Baptism for themselves or for their Children, but such as were also admitted to the Lords Supper. But of this also we must say, That we finde not any thing that proves it, but much to the contrary. And though we have not met with any that have purposely handled this Point touching the different extent of these two Sacraments, yet we finde enough to shew us, That the Churches of Christ in all, especially in the best Ages, and the choicest Lights therein, both Ancient and Modern, have concurred and met in this Principle (as a granted and undoubted Truth) that Baptism is of larger extent than the Lords Supper: so as that many that are within the visible Church may have Baptism for themselves, or at least for their Children, who yet ought not presently to partake of the Lords Supper, or who do at present want actual fitness for it. The Witnesses above cited, tell us that in Ancient times they did not so much impart any thing to the *Catechumens* about the Lords Supper, till after their Baptism: And, if *Hammer* have rightly observed, even the Adult, after their Baptism, must have Confirmation before they partaked of the Lords Supper. *Hammer* of Confirmation, pag.

15—22. And vid. pag. 59. *Τέλειος* or *Perfectus* among the Ancients, is as much as (with us) one in full Communion; but none were by them reckoned to be perfects (in the Rank of perfect Christians) that had not received the holy Ghost either in extraordinary Gifts, or in special confirming Grace. See *Hammer* of Confirmation, pag. 17. Now it is evident, that even in the Apostles times sundry were baptized, that had not so received the holy Ghost, *Acts* 8. 13; 16. 17. & 19. 2—5.

But there are sundry further Evidences at hand (were there room here to insert them).

which show that in those first Ages of the Church, there were many within the Church, that were debarred from the Lords Supper: who yet had their Children baptized. In after times how large Baptism was, may easily be gathered: But that there was (though not much laxities) some more restraint in the Lords Supper, appears by the Canons old Verse,

Erubus, infamis, erroneus, atq; Furcivus,

Cum pueris, Domini non debent sumere corpus.

As for the times since the Reformation, it is most evident that Godly Reforming Divines have in their Doctrine unanimously taught, and in their Practice (many of them) endeavoured a strict Selection of those that should be admitted to the Lords Supper, when yet they have been made large in point of Baptism; and they still go upon this Principle, that Not all Christians, nor all baptized and generally-professing Christians, but only such as are able (or may be reputed able and careful) to examine themselves, and discern the Lords Body, are to be admitted to the Lords Supper. But they reckon that All Christians (as that are, in their account, within the visible Church) are to have their Children baptized. Be it that in Practice they were, many of them, too lax and large in both the Sacraments, chiefly through want of a due and effectual use of Discipline (by defect whereof many were sinfully tolerated in the Church, who should have been cast out and cut off, and many suffered to come to the Lords Table, who should have been debarred and suspended) or which themselves do oft sadly complain (b) Yet it shews thus much (which is that we aim at) that they held a different Latitude of the two Sacraments, as to the Subjects thereof (even in the very sense of our Question) denying the Lords Supper to many Parents, whose Children yet they scrupled not to baptize: This goes for current among all our great Divines as a granted Principle, whereof many true and full Testimonies might easily be produced.

Calvin in his Geneva case him, to that Question, Whether Pastors may give the Sacraments to all? Answers, *Quod ad Baptisum pertinet, quia non nisi Infantibus hæc concessur, discretio locum non habet: in Can vero cavere debet. Minister ne cui ipsam porrigit, quem indignum esse palam constet.* If Calvin would Baptize all Children born among them without difference (looking upon them as born within the visible Church) and yet not give the Lords Supper to all, then he would Baptize some Children whose Parents he would not admit to the Lords Supper.

Lulov. Crucius describing the Subjects of Baptism, saith, *Infantes vero omnes, &c.* All such Infants as are either born of Christian Parents, or brought into the society of Christians are to be Baptized. But of the Lords Supper, *Sic quidem Christiani, &c.* Only Christians are to be admitted to the Holy Supper, yet not promiscuously all Christians; but only those who both can and will examine themselves, rightly discern the Lords Body, and celebrate this Sacrament unto a Commemoration of the Death of Christ—but there are many in the Christian Church that either cannot or will not do those things, and these are not to be admitted.

Burton, touching the Lords Supper, saith, *Est Sacramentum, &c.* It is a Sacrament appointed for such in the Christian Church as are already baptized and Adult, and do examine themselves (a). And in another place (b) unto this Question, To whom is the Lords Supper to be given? He Answers, To all the Faithful Members of the Church, who can examine themselves, and are instructed in the Mystery of Faith, and can bear forth the Lords Death. For unto this Mystery there is required examination of ourselves, and Annunciation of the Lords Death. And therefore it is not to be given to Unbelievers, not to Infants, not to dissipated persons, not to those that are ignorant of the mystery, not to those impatient, not to those that are by the orderly judgement of the Church excommunicate, not to such as are polluted either with manifest errors, or with any notorious wickedness, until they have first satisfied the Church, and given Testimony of their Repentance. Compare herewith his Latitude for Baptism, expressly granting that to sundry of those sorts, to whom he denies the Lords Supper. (c).

Heza, concerning the Question, who are to be Baptized? saith, All that are so pretended within the Tables of the Covenant, &c. (d). But to that Question, Would you admit all sorts to the Lords Supper? He Answers with great zeal for strictness and care therein, and among other expressions, *Those (saith he) whose way of exercise them not to be of ability to examine themselves are to abstain, though not as unworthy, but as not yet fit. But of the adult, no one is to be admitted, except he have one way or other so given account of his Faith as that the Pastor may probably gather (not only that he was born in the Church but also) that he is indeed a Christian, &c.*

Polanus,

Gerhard. de Sacra
Cens. p. 184.

(b) See Ratio.
Disciplina Fy-
trum Eodem. in
Hist. pramissa.
p. 3—35. &
39—132, 53.

Opuscul. pag. 37.

Synag. Theolog.
pag. 1149. with
pag. 1167, 1168.
(a) Loc. Com. de
Canâ Dom. quæst.
2. pag. 651.

(b) Quæst. 137.
pag. 7. o. & vii.
Quæst. 142. pag.
745.

(c) De Baptismo
Quæst. 33 & 34.
pag. 624, 625.

See the Leyden
Divines, Synopf.
Disput. 45. Thes.
14. & Disput. 48.
Thes. 35, 36.
Compared with
Disput. 44. Thes.
30.

(d) Quæst. &
Resp. de Sacra-
mentis, Quæst.
120, 122.

(e) Ibid. Quæst.
245.

Testimonies touching the Subjects of the Lords Supper, faith, Unto the Lords Supper may be admitted only Christians already Baptized and adults, and such as can examine themselves, with thank, all him to remember (Eph. 4. 1. show forth) the death. But on Baptism, *And that are in Covenant with God*—*Infants born of Christian Parents are to be Baptized.*

God has in his Common places, all sorts, that *Sole Christians, &c.* Only Christians (i.e. such as embrace the Doctrine of Christ, as have received the Sacrament of Baptism, and are implanted into the Christian Church) yet not all Christians are to be admitted to the holy Supper; but according to Paul's Rule, *they only that examine themselves, discern the Lords Body, and show forth the Lords death,* 1 Cor. 11. 28, 29, 30. *And thye therefore are excluded, who either will not or cannot examine themselves (F).* But he extends Baptism to all Children born of (one or both) Christian Parents, or that come into the power of such (G).

The like may be observed in the Confessions of the Reformed Churches, when as they declare for a special selection of those whom they admit to the Lords Supper. See the Confession of Eubodia. *Harmony of confessi.* pag. 421. of *belgia.* pag. 432. of *Augsburg.* pag. 428, 440. of *Saxony.* pag. 447, 448. and the Confession of Scotland in the end of that *Harmony,* pag. 24. comparing this with the deep silence of them all touching any such Selection, in point of Baptism, to the Children that are born among them: and it is known to be their ordinary practice to Baptize many Children, whose Parents they would not admit to the Lords Supper.

All which, with many more Testimonies that might be alleged, do abundantly shew it to have been the concurrent judgement of Protestant Divines, that Baptism is of greater Latitude than the Lords Supper: and that all that do bring their Children to partake of the former, may at therefore themselves presently partake of the latter; but that many may have their Children Baptized and yet regularly be debarred from the Lords Supper.

We might also mention the Concurrence of Divines with us in particular Reasons, Explications, and Affertions relating to this matter: as, That Baptism is annexed to the *beginning* of Faith, the Lords Supper to the *special exercise* of it: That Baptism belongs to all Members, but the Lords Supper to *seasons* that are so and so qualified: that all visible Believers, (who in a latitude of Expression, and Ecclesiastical reputation are such, as are all that are within the Church) are not to be admitted to the Lords Supper.

Ursin and *Pareus*, answering that Objection against the Baptism of Infants, that *They must be admitted to the Lords Supper*; have these words: *Magnum discrimen, &c.* There is a great Difference between Baptism and the Supper. For, 1. Baptism is a Sacrament of Entrance and Reception into the Church: But the Supper is a Sacrament of Continuance in the Church, or a Confirmation of the Reception before made—2. Regeneration by the holy Ghost and Faith, or an Inclination to Faith and Repentance, sufficeth unto Baptism: But in the Supper it is required, 1. That they that use it, do show forth the Lords death. 2. That they examine themselves whether they have Faith and Repentance (h). And in another place, in Answer to that Question, *What the Supper differs from Baptism?* they thus speak, *Efficiendum Beneficium, &c.* Although the same Benefits are vouchsafed forth and sealed to us in Baptism, and in the Supper, viz. Fellowship with Christ, and the whole benefit of Salvation, &c. — Yet there be various and manifest differences between these two Sacraments. First they differ—3. In their proper (or next) ends: Baptism is a sign of Regeneration, and of Entrance into the Church and Covenant of God: The Supper is a sign of the Nutrition, Continuance, and Confirmation of them who are once entered into the Church—4. In Baptism, the Lord confirms our Admission into the Church: In the Supper, our Confirmation and growth. 5. In the way and manner of using, or partaking of them. Unto the lawful use of Baptism, Regeneration sufficeth: and therefore it agree to be administered by the Church, either by one, or as a minister for regenerate: such are all adult persons possessing Faith and Repentance, and Infants born in the Church. But the Supper requires a special probation of the Faith of the partakers, a commutation of the Lords death, and thanksgiving (Luke 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 26, 28) Baptism therefore cometh to the whole Church, i.e. to infants as well as to the adult: But the Supper only to the adult, who can examine themselves, and show forth the Lords death. 6. In the order of participation: Baptism ought to go before, and the Lords Supper to follow, i.e. the Supper ought not to be given to any, but such as are first baptized, and

Synod. Lib. 6. cap. 56. with conf. 55.

(c) *Fide Dutch Annot. on 1 Cor. 11. 26.*

(f) *De Sacra mentis.* pag. 180.

(g) *De Baptismo* pag. 58, 55, 52.

(h) *Explicat. canonic. in quest. 74. pag. 372.*

(i) *In quest.* 75. *penitence* (i). and not to them presently, but after that they have held forth a confession of Faith and Repentance (i).
pag. 380.

Also it may be minded, that it is the current and constant expression of our Divines, that they call, and count all that are within the compass of the visible Church (whether Infants, or adult) *Fideles, Vocati*, (Faithful, called &c.) And they will tell you that they are for Baptizing no Infants but such as are (*Infantes fideles*) the Infants of the Faithful or of Believers, *Infantes non omnes, sed duntaxat fideles*, i.e. *Baptizatorum, sunt Baptizandi*. Chamier. Tom. 4. pag. 130. So *Danew, Infantes ex fidelibus*, i.e. *Baptizandi nati, possunt Baptizari in Ecclesia*. Lib. 5. De Sacram. pag. 538.

And yet they do not look at all these (no not at all the adult that come under this denomination, and whose Children they Baptize) to be regularly-admittable to the Lords Supper, which plainly shews their judgement to be that all adult Persons who are in a Latitude of expression to be accounted visible Believers (or in Ecclesiastical Reputation to be lookt at as *Fideles*) are not therefore to partake of the Lords Supper.

Dr. Ames, accounts that a person may be a Believer on Christ and yet be unfit for the Lords Supper, being not sufficiently instructed thereunto. *B. Uar. Enerv. Tom. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. 1.* and he expressly saith that Church-children are to be numbred among the Faithful, and reckons them to have the beginning of Faith, yet not to be admitted to all Ordinances till increase of Faith appear. *Medul. Lib. 1. Cap. 32. Thef. 12, 13.*

Mr. Hooker takes it for granted as a clear case, That one may be a Convert soundly brought home to Christ, and yet through his weakness not able to discern the Lords Body aright, nor fit to partake of the Supper. *Survey. part. 3. pag. 16.*

And in his Sermons on Gen. 17. 23. Pag. 21. He hath these words, *Baptism is the entrance into Christs Family; there is much more to be looked at to make a person capable of the Supper of the Lord, a man must be able to Examine himself, he must not onely have Grace, but growth of Grace; he must have so much perfection in Grace as to search his own heart, and he must be able to discern the Lords Body, or else he is guilty of the Body and blood of Christ; so as there is more required in this, for there must be a growth. But Baptism is our entrance, and the lowest degree of Grace will serve here in the judgement of Charity.*

Worthy Hilderham on Psal. 51. 5. pag. 257. saith, The Infants of the Faithful are said to be Holy, not because they are without sin, but because (in the judgement of the Church) they are to be esteemed not Infidels as other Children of Vagans, but Christians and Believers, and holy and true Members of the Church of God. And Hence 1. So soon as they are born they have title to the Seal of Gods Covenant, and the Church may not deny it unto them.—And why may not the Church deny Baptism to any child of a believing Parent? Surely because the Church is bound to esteem every such child not an Infidel, but rather a Believer and a true Christian. 2. When they dye we are in Christian Charity to judge that they dye in Gods favour, and in the state of Salvation. And all this because of the Covenant, Gen. 17. as he there adds. Yet the same Hilderham would not admit such as these (who were born and grew up in the visible Church) to the Lords Table, without a strict Examination not onely of their Knowledge and Lives, but of their Spiritual Estate. Doct. of Lords Supper, pag. 8—14.

All which we produce, not as if the Testimony and concurrence of *Authors* were the Basis that our judgement in this matter stands upon, but because this Preface doth, both in this place and in other parts of it, insinuate to the Reader as if *Aukority* of Writers were for the Dissenters; and against the Doctrine of the Synod, which is farre from being so: the contrary being abundantly, and undeniably evident. And as we bottom our Faith in this point, wholly and onely upon the Scriptures, and do referre the decision of this and of all other Theological controversies to the Law and to the Testimony: so we acknowledge it to be no small confirmation to us, to finde that we have the Concurrence of the Godly-learned. The substance of the Congregational-Way may be gathered from the Doctrine & Principles of our best and ablest Reforming Divines (k): which doth not a little confirm us in it, and delivers it from the Imputation of Novelty or Singularity. But should we limit Baptism to so narrow a scantling as our Brethren strive for, we should therein go against the whole stream of Divines, even of those that have been most eminent in their generations for Learning, Holiness, and Studiousness.

(k) So much Parkers learned Labours among others shew, and our Congregational Brethren in England met at the Savoy, in their Preface do well expreis: And see Beverly Examen Hoornb. pag. 43.

Studiouſness of Reformation; yea, of those from whom our *Congregational Leaders* have professed to receive their *Principles*, as was above said. And we confess our selves conscious to so much of our own weakness, that unless we have very clear Light, and undeniable Argument constraining us, we are slow and fearful to go alone, or to go contrary to the concurrent Judgement of our best Divines, who (if we may use our Brethrens phrase) have been *Stars of the first Magnitude, incomparable Champions for the Truth*, and have been raised up by Christ to light the Path of Reformation in these later Ages.

Now as for what is here alleged by our Brethren as favouring their Cause; To say, *That the Catechumens were not (in the Primitive times) to be baptized, before they were first for the Lords Supper.* Consider how it can consist with the above mentioned practice of Antiquity, in not so much as teaching the Catechumens any thing about the Lords Supper, till after they were baptized. Indeed, as the Darkneis and Corruption of the times increased, Baptism was not onely deferred till Easter (as is here said) but till death, which is justly taxed as an abuse by *Cartwright* in his *Catechism*, pag. 182. and we suppose will not be approved by any. The *Arausiacan Councils*, 19 Canon, doth not concern the matter of Baptism, as it is set down by the *Magdeburg Centurists* (Cent. 5. pag. 907.) But, however it be, it is of small moment. The over-long holding off of adult Converts from Baptism, that we sometimes read of in the *Fourth and Fifth Centuries*, was a manifest deviation from the Apostolical practice. We finde also that in *Austin's* time, and some ages after, they gave the Lords Supper to Infants, yet then we suppose they would give both Sacraments to some Infants, whole Parents they debarred from the Lords Supper. But if it was indeed a grievous error to administer the Lords Supper to Infants (as is here rightly said by our Brethren) how then is Baptism of no greater Latitude, also the Subject thereof, then the Lords Supper? Yea, let any man shew a reason why Baptism should be regularly extendible to Infants, and not the Lords Supper, at the very same qualifications be absolutely requisite to the one as to the other, we say, absolutely requisite: for no man doubts but that the better qualifications a person who receiveth Baptism for himself, or for his Children, is endued with, the better and the more comfortable it is.

As for that of *Juel*, That Baptism is as much to be revered, as the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. And that which follows, That former Ages have been sorne from looking upon the Lords Supper as being of a more sacred nature, then the other Ordinance of Baptism.

Ans. To assert that Scripture Rules make the Subject of Baptism larger then the Subject of the Lords Supper, this doth not detract from the Reverence of Baptism, nor render it an Ordinance of a less sacred nature, as is here insinuated. The Word and Prayer are Ordinances of a very sacred nature, and to be highly revered, and yet many may be admitted unto them, that may not be admitted unto Sacraments. The Sacredness of every Ordinance, lies in the holy and religious application of it, to its proper ends and uses by Divine Institution: But the proper ends and uses of one Ordinance may, by Divine Institution, be such as may admit more to partake of it then of another, and yet the sacred nature thereof be no whit impaired.

But the Preface adds: *Indeed of late there have been those who have made Baptism of a farre larger extent then the Lords Supper: This hath been one Practical Difference between Congregational-men and Presbyterians.*

Ans. Whether it have been onely a late or novell Notion, to make Baptism larger then the Lords Supper, let the Reader judge, when he hath considered the Testimonies before alledged, with many more that might have been added thereunto: But we are so firre from looking upon a different Latitude of these two Sacraments to be a Presbyterian Principle, or Anti-Congregational, as that we persuade our selves, the Congregational way cannot long stand without it. For, if we deny this, and administer Baptism to none but

(b). Consider whether it be not a greater detracting from the sacredness of Baptism, when we make but a light matter of that Membership and Covenant that was sealed therein. If men have been once admitted to the Lords Supper, they count their Membership stands firm & good (through all decays and degeneracies) until excommunicate. But the Solemo Covenant & Engagement between God and the Baptized, that was ratified in holy Baptism, wears away, and is a kinde of forgotten thing by that time they become adult. To be difficult in admissions unto Baptism, and yet easie in letting go the benefit of Baptism (or the Membership thereby sealed) and to alledge the Sacredness of the Ordinance for the former, and forget in the latter, seem not well to cohere.

Let those whose Parents do partake of the Lords Supper, and so are in full Communion; then we must either make full Communion very large, which in the Congregational-way, where Brethren have so great an interest in Church-transactions, will soon ruine all: or else make Baptism, and consequently the Compass of the visible Church so strait, as will never stand before Rational and Scriptural men; yea, we shall put multitudes out of the visible Church, that are in a visible state of Salvation, which is absurd: for to deny persons Baptism for themselves or Children; is to deny them to be within the Compass of the visible Church, seeing Baptism ought to run parallel with Church-Membership. But how shall we deny them a room in the visible Church, who were once in, and are by no Rule to be put out, nay whom God (as we may charitably hope) taketh into Heaven when they die, and that as a fruit of his Covenant-grace? which is the case of many of our Children who are not yet come up to full Communion. But so much for the second Reason of our Brethrens Dissent. The third follows.

3. The Parents of the Children in question, are not Members of any Instituted Church, according to Gospel-rules; because they were never under any explicate and personal Covenant. Which is further proved; Because if they be Members, then they would be a true Church though all their Parents were dead, and then they must have power of Voting in Church-affairs, which is denied to them by the Synod.

Ans. 1. It seems, by what is here said, that our Children were never under any explicate and personal Covenant, and that all that never were so, are not members of any Instituted Church according to Gospel-rules. If this be so, then what is become of Childrens Membership, which the Apologist before, in Answer to Objection Second, took it as an injury to be charged with the denial of? It seems our Children neither are nor ever were Members of any instituted Church according to Gospel-rules, because they were never under any explicate and personal Covenant. Is it come to this, that Children are not Members of any Instituted Church? How then? are they Members of the Catholick visible Church? or are they no Members at all? the former our Brethren fancy not, as it seems by their Anti-Synodalia, pag. 19. the latter they remains to be the conclusion. Neither will it save it to say, they were Members in Minority, though they be not Members now when they are Adults; for if all those that were never under any explicate and personal Covenant, be no Members of any Instituted Church, and if Children were never under any explicate and personal Covenant (both which are here said) then no Children (no not while in Minority) are Members of any Instituted Church. For our parts we doubt not to affirm with Dr. Ames in his Chapter de Ecclesiâ institutâ, that Children are Members of an Instituted Church according to Gospel-rules, and that they are under personal Covenant, i. e. personally taken into Covenant by God, according to his Gospel-rules, though they have not performed the act of Covenanting in their own persons. Yea, under explicate Covenant also, if the Parents Covenanting was explicate, Deut. 29. So Ames, They are partakers of the same Covenant, and also of the same profession with their Parents. Though we take it for a Principle granted by Congregational-men, with one consent, that Implicate Covenant preserves the being of a true Church, and so of true Church-membership.

2. The Consequent of our assertion here urged as absurd, viz. [That then, in case all the pro-parents were dead, this second Generation would be a true Church of Christ without any further act or covenanting] is no absurdity but a manifest Truth, i. e. taking that Phrase [Further act, or covenanting] to be meant of a particular formal act of Explicate Verbal covenanting. For otherwise, there is a further act, yea an act of (implicate) covenanting in their constant and publick profession of the Religion of their Fathers. But we say this second Generation, continuing (to use Mr. Cottons Phrase in Grounds of Baptism, pag. 106.) in a visible profession of the Covenant, Faith, and Religion of their Fathers, are a true Church of Christ, though they have not yet made any explicate personal expression of their engagement, as their Fathers did. Even as the Israelites that were numbered in the Plains of Moab were a true Church, and under the Covenant of God; made with them in Horeb, though their Parents with whom it was first made in Horeb, were all dead, and that before the solemn renewing of the Covenant with them in the plains of Moab, Deut. 29. see Deut. 5. 2, 3, with Numb. 26. 63, 64, 65. and so.

Mr. Hooker.

Mr. Hooper roundly, and expressly affirms this which is here by our Brethren denied, Survey. Part. 1. pag. 48.

3. As for our denial of the liberty of Voting in Church-affairs to the persons in question, will they be fitted for, and admitted to the Lords Supper, it stands good and rational without any prejudice to their being a true Church in the case supposed. For there is no difficulty in it, to conceive that the case of a true Church may be such (by degeneracy, or loss of their best Members, &c.) as that they may be at present unfit to put forth or exercise a power of acting in Church-affairs (though it be radically in them) till by the use of needful means they, or a select qualified number among them, be brought up unto a better and fitter capacity for it. And examples hereof are not farre to seek: let that way of reforming corrupt and degenerate Churches be attended which is partly suggested in Mr. *Alin's*, and Mr. *Shepard's* Preface, before their Defence of the Nine Positions (which Preface *Beverly* saith is *Instauratum*) Pag. 10, 18, 19, 20. viz. that they be acknowledged true Churches, and called by the powerful Preaching of the word to Humiliation, Repentance, and agreement unto Reformation: and then that such as do so agree, and submit to Discipline, being owned to be of the Church; among them a select number who are found upon tryal able to examine themselves, and discern the Lords body, and do walk according to Christ, do solemnly renew or enter into Covenant, and so electing officers, &c. enjoy full communion, and carry on all Church-affairs in the Congregational way. This shews that a Church may be out of case for the present exercise of a proper Church power, and may need much preparation, and reduction into order before it come up thereunto: and yet this doth not hinder it from being a true Church, nor from having that power radically in it, and which in a way of due order it may come to the exercise of. Have not the late times had experience of many Congregations unto which it was fain to be a publick care to send Ministers, and they to preach to them many years before they found a number fit for full Communion and management of Church-affairs? and yet they retained the being of true Churches, and Church-members all this while. See also Mr. *Shepard's* late-printed Letter about the Church-membership of Children, pag. 18. We might also ask whether such a manner of reasoning as is here used would prove Women to be no Members of an Instituted Church? Because if all the Men were dead, they could not then be a Church, nor Vote in Church-affairs, chuse Officers, &c.

Еклезіа Новаго
pag. 20.

But that which is said may suffice: onely let us adde, that as the case that is supposed, viz. of all the Parents (or all that were in full Communion) being dead, at once, is rarely, if ever heard of; so also the case we added, viz. for the whole body to be fallen into an unfitness for full Communion, by corruption and degeneracy, would be (we may hope) as rare, if Discipline and other Ordinances be kept up, in their use and vigour. God will so bless his own Ordinances, if duly attended, as that a considerable number shall from time to time have such Grace given them as to be fit for full Communion, and to carry on all the things of his House with competent Strength, Beauty, and Edification.

The fourth Reason of our Brethrens Dissent, is this: It is not meer Membership (as the Synod speaks) but qualified Membership that gives right unto Baptism: for John's Baptism might not be applied unto the standing Members of the visible Church, till they were qualified with Repentance. This (say they) seems to us to cut the sinews of the strongest Arguments of the Synod for enlargement of Baptism: for neither doth the Scripture acknowledge any such meer Membership as they speak of; nor is it meer Membership, but qualified Membership that gives right unto this divine and sacred Ordinance.

Answer. This term or distinction of [Meer Membership] is here, as also in the Book to which this Preface is prefixed, much exagitated, and harshly censured: but let the plain meaning of the Synod therein be attended, and there will appear no cause for such exagitation. When the Synod said, that persons are not therefore to be admitted to full Communion merely because they are and continue Members; and that Meer Membership (or Membership alone) doth not suffice to render men Subjects of the Lords Supper, Propos. 4. p. 17, 18. the meaning is, That full Communion doth not belong to a Member as such, or to a person merely because he is a Member, for then it would belong to all Members, which it doth not. A person may be a Member (or in memberly Relation) and yet not be in full Communion. Now to say that meer Membership (in this sense) the Scripture acknowledgeth not, is as if

who should say, that the Scripture acknowledgeth not *Logical Distinctions* between things in their Abstract and general Nature, and the same things as clothed with various Adjuncts and Accessions; which to say, were strangely to forget our selves. But when it is hence inferred and put upon us, That we set up a meer Membership, and a sort of *meer Members* in the Church; this is an unnecessary Reflexion. As, if we should say that Riches do not belong to men *meerly as men*, or meerly because they are men; would it be a good inference to say, that we set up a sort of *meer men* (or a *meer Humanity* existing alone), or that we distinguish men into *Meer men*, and *Rich men*? There is no individual man in the world that is a *meer man*, i.e. that hath a naked Humanity without Adjuncts; yet *Logick* distinguisheth between *Humanity* and its *Adjuncts*, and between what belongeth to a man as such, and what accreth to him *other ways*. So in the Church; Membership, or memberly Relation, is not existent in particular persons, without *some Communion* flowing from it, nor yet without *some Qualifications* (unto Charity) under it, more or less, at least ordinarily; though it may, and often does exist without those *special and peculiar qualifications* that fit men for the Lords Table. But surely we may well distinguish, especially between the memberly Relation and those *special superadded Qualifications*, and between what belongs to persons in the one respect, and in the other. For some Privileges in the Church belong to persons by virtue of their memberly Relation, or *meerly because they are Members*; they belong to a Member as such: so does Baptism, *Matth. 28. 19.* the Benefit of Church-watch and Discipline (*viz.* according to *Natural* capacity in regard of age, there is no other *Moral* capacity but that of Membership requisite to a Subject thereof) *Acts 20. 28. 1 Cor. 5. 12* and a share in the common *Legacies* of the Covenant, *Rom. 3. 21, 22. & 9. 4. Acts 3. 25, 26.* Meer Membership, or Membership alone, gives right to these things. But there be other Privileges in the Church that do not belong to Members as such (or to persons meerly because they are Members) but to *Members as clothed with such and such special qualifications*. So the *Passover* and other *holy things* of old, and so the *Lords Supper* now, *1 Cor. 11. 28.*

Now thus to distinguish, does not distribute Members into *meer Members* and *others*, but it distributes Privileges unto their proper Subjects, and states the *immediate Right* unto each sort of Privileges upon its proper Basis. If we say that Government of a Family does not belong to persons meerly because they are Members of the Family; do we thereby set up a sort of *meer Members* thereof, that have no Family-benefit, but only a Titular Relation to it, &c? Indeed such a saying would impore, that in a Family there are some that are *Governours*, and some that are *not Governours* of it; as also that one may be a Member of a Family, and yet have no hand in the Government thereof. So the distinction in hand implies, That in the Church some are in full Communion, and some are not; and that one may be in Memberly Relation, and yet not be in full Communion: and surely the truth of this cannot be doubted of. If Children in minority be Members (as our Brethren acknowledge them to be) then there are some Members that are not in (nor yet fit for) full Communion. And for the *Adult*, when a man is by *Admonition* debarred from the Lords Table, and yet not Excommunicated; does he not continue a Member (yea, a *personal Member* in our Brethrens account) and yet is not in full Communion? This demonstrates that Membership and full Communion are distinct and separable things. It is clear enough, that our Non excommunicable Children do continue Members of the Church; yet many of them are not in full Communion, nor will our Brethren say that they are fit for it. So then, neither the *Logical distinction* between what belongs to persons simply as Members (or by their meer Membership) and what belongs to them as further endued with such and such special qualifications; nor yet the *Affertion* flowing from it, *viz. [That some may be and continue Members, and yet not be in full Communion]* can justly be objected against. The sum is; The persons in question have by virtue of their memberly Relation (or meerly by their Membership) a proper right unto the Privileges that are desired for them; yet withall, they have some qualifications, and some Communion (and so are not *meer Members* in contradistinction hereunto) though they have not yet such full qualifications as to come into full Communion.

But thus much being said concerning that distinction which the Synod useth, and the meaning of it: Proceed weto the *Affertion* here laid down by our Brethren, and their

Proof

Proof thereof. Their Assertion is, That it is not meer Membership, but qualified Membership that gives right to Baptism.

Remember here, that our dispute properly is of Membership *de jure*, or *regular Membership*, (i. e. wherein the Rule appoints or allows one to be, or to be continued a member of the visible Church) not of Membership *de facto* only. Now Membership *de jure*, or *regular Membership*, implies *some qualification*, as. *viz.* that a person being a Church-member is not under such gross, and incorrigible Ignorance, Heresie, Scandal or Apostacy, as renders him an immediate Subject of Excommunication; hence *meer Membership* is not so to be opposed to *qualified Membership*, as if it were destitute of all qualifications. Those whom the Lord doth, and whom the Church, acting regularly, may own, and continue as Members, they are so farre qualified as that the Rule hath accepted them into Covenant, and doth not appoint us to put them out. Now then, understanding meer Membership for [*Meerly this, that a man is regularly a Member*] and qualified Membership for [*Superadded qualifications, over and above what is essentially requisite to regular Membership*] the above Assertion is thus much; *It is not sufficient to give a person right to Baptism, that he be regularly a Member of the visible Church, but he must have some further qualification then so, or else he hath not right therunto.* This Assertion (or to say, in this sense) that it is not meer Membership, but qualified Membership that gives right to Baptism, is indeed an *Antisynodalian* Assertion, and we doubt not to affirm it is *Antisynodalian*.

1. It is *Antisynodalian*, or directly opposite to the *D. Urine of the Synod*, and we will readily grant that if this could be proved, it cuts asunder the sinews of the Synods strongest Arguments; for this is that which the Synod stand and build upon, That it is *Covenant-interest*, or *Federal holiness*, or *visible Church-membership* (which are but several exprellions of the same thing) that properly gives Right to Baptism, or, that Baptism belongs to a *Church-member as such*, and so to all Church-members. And hence by the way, let it be minded that the Synod in their fifth Proposition have comprized both the Right to Baptism, and the manner of administration: the distinction between which two, was often-over mentioned in the Synod; though they put both together in the Proposition for better concurrence sake, and that they might at once familiarly set down what is to be attended in such a case. The [*Right*] stands upon [*Membership*] whereby the parent, and so the Child is regularly within the visible Church; so as no more qualification in the Parent is simply necessary; to give the Child right to Baptism, but what is essentially requisite unto *regular Membership*. As for other and further qualifications pointed to in the Proposition (as. *Giving account of their assent to the Doctrine of Faith, Solemn owning of the Covenant, &c.*) they properly belong to the manner of Administration. Yet these are not therefore *needless things*, nor may they be disregarded, or boldly slighted and refused by any (because Membership alone gives Right) for God hath made it one Commandment of four, to provide for the manner of his Worship, requiring that all his holy Ordinances be attended in a Solemn, Humble, Reverent and Profitable manner: and it cannot be denied to be meet and needful, that persons should both know and own the Covenant-state they are in, and the state of subjection to Christs Government, which the Covenant placeth them in, especially when they partake of such a fruit of the Covenant as Baptism for their Children is: that they should do *Covenant-duties*, when they come for *Covenant-privileges*; that they should both seek and attend the Lords holy Ordinance (though it be their Right never so much) in *Humility and Fear*; and it being one Branch of the Covenant, that they give up their Children to the Lord, and do promise to take care for their Christian Education, it must needs be suitable that they be minded of it when they present them to Baptism, and the more explicitly they do so promise, it is the better. Hence all Reformed Churches do in their *Directories, and Practices*, require *Professions and Promises of Parents*, or those that present the Child to Baptism, and appoint a Solemn manner of Administration, and stand upon it as a needful duty. Though they unanimously own and grant, that the Child hath a full and clear Right to Baptism by its being born within the visible Church. See *English Liturgie* of the administration of Baptism. *Directory*, pag. 31. *Late Petition for Peace*, pag. 61, &c. *Zepperi Polit. Eccl.* pag. 128. & pag. 147—150. *Alasco*, pag. 121—127. *Ratio Discip. Bohem.* pag. 42. Hence also no man will doubt but that it is a comfortable and desirable thing, that the

Parent do address himself in the most solemn, serious, and spiritual manner to draw nigh to God upon such an occasion as the Baptizing of a Child, by humbling himself before God for all neglects and Breaches of his Covenant, by taking hold of the encouraging promises of Grace in Christ, in reference unto the Children of the Covenant; and by

(K) It is not the qualifications of one in full Communion, but his Membership that gives his Childeright to Baptism; for suppose he decay in qualification, and grow formal and loose, yet while he continues a Member unencumbered, he hath his Childer baptized as well as the best in the Church.

pouring out earnest Prayer to God for his Child, and for an heart to do the duty of a Christian Parent toward his Child, as doth become him, &c. And such things as these, Parents may and ought to be settled up unto in the Ministry of the Word, as their duty. But still we must distinguish between what belongs to the manner of Administration, or to the better and more comfortable attendance thereof, and between what is essentially requisite to give right and title to the Ordinance before the Church. This latter, meer Membership (or Membership alone) doth.

A state of Membership in the visible Church, is that unto which the right of Baptism is annexed (K), as not only the Synod, but the Scripture teacheth. And so,

2. The Assertion before-mentioned (viz. That it is not meer Membership, but qualified Membership that gives right to Baptism: in the sense above given) is also Antiscriptural; 1. Because it directly overthroweth Infant-baptism, which the Scripture establisheth: for what have Infants more then Membership (or Federal holiness, or Covenant-interest) to give them right to Baptism? i. e. What have they more then this, that they are regularly (by the Rules of Gods Word, and his Institution therein) within the visible Church? If this will not suffice, but there must be some other qualifications besides, and super-added unto this, what shall become of them? For our parts, we know no stronger Argument for Infants-baptism then that; Church members, or Fœderati, are to be baptized; *The Infants of the Faithful are Church members, or Fœderati: Ergo.* But if the foresaid Assertion hold, this Argument fails, and falls short: for now Church-membership, or to be in Covenant, or Federal holiness, will not serve the turn, but there must be more then this to give right to Baptism. How the *finew*s of the strongest Arguments of the Synod for Enlargement of Baptism will fare, we know not; but sure we are, that this cuts in under the *finew*s of the strongest Arguments for Infant-baptism, which must fall if this stand. But fall it never will (through Grace) while the Lords Appointment in the Covenant of Abraham stands, viz. to have the Initiating Seal run parallel with the Covenant, Gen. 17. or Christs Commission, Matth. 28. 19. viz. to Baptize all Disciples, or all Members of the visible Church under the New Testament. Let this Assertion therefore fall, which makes the extent of the Initiatory Seal shorter then the Covenant, and denies Baptism to run parallel with Church-membership under the Gospel. Hence, 2. It contradicts that which the Harmony of Scripture, and all Orthodox Divines acknowledge for a Principle, viz. That the whole visible Church (i. e. now under the New Testament) ought to be baptized; or that all Church members are Subjects of Baptism: for, if not meer Membership (or Membership alone) but qualified Membership gives right to Baptism; then not all Members, but some onely, viz. those that be so and so qualified, are to be baptized. If Baptism do not belong to meer Membership, or to a Member or such, then not so all Members: as *a quatenus ad omnes, so a non quatenus ad non omnes valet consequentia.* This denies not onely the Fifth, but the First Proposition of the late Synod (which yet the Antisynodalia, pag. 17. seem to consent unto.) But let the Arguments that are given from Scripture to confirm that First Proposition, be duely weighed, and they will be found to be of greater weight then to be shaken by this Assertion.

Now for the Proof of this Assertion; viz. Because John's Baptism, which was Christian Baptism, might not be applied to some who were standing Members of the visible Church, because they were not qualified with Repentance, Luke 3. 8. & 7. 30. Therefore Christian Baptism is not to be applied unto such as stand Members in the visible Church, if they be not qualified with fruits of Repentance.

Ans. Let this be answered with reference to Infant-baptism, which lies upon our Brethren to do, as well as on us, seeing they above declared Antipædobaptism to be a sinful Opinion, and do profess to hold and maintain the baptizing of Infants: though indeed the Reader could not gather so much from these words [*Christian Baptism is not to be applied unto such as stand Members in the visible Church, if they be not qualified with fruits of Repentance*]

Repentance.] This seems directly to gainsay Infant-baptism; for Infants do indeed stand Members of the visible Church, but how do they or can they show that they are qualified with *fruits of Repentance*? for it seems that neither is *Repentance* itself sufficient without [*Fruits*] of Repentance. But we are to suppose our Brethren do not intend to oppose Infant-baptism, and therefore that their meaning is not to require these fruits of Repentance (or qualifications superadded to Membership) of the *Children* or persons to be baptized, but of their *Parents*; though it be not so expressed. But let this Argument from *John's* requiring of qualifications over and above Membership, be answered, with reference to Infant-baptism, and that will answer it as to the case in hand. We remember in *Debates* between the *Elders* and an *Antipædobaptist* many years since, this very Argument was urged by him, and the same Answer that was given then, we shall give here; *Viz.*

1. That merely to be a Member of the *Old-Testament Jewish Church*, or simply to be in Covenant (or Confederate) under the Old-Testament manner of Administration, *sufficeth not to Baptism*; but to be in the Church and Covenant of the *New-Testament*, to be a Member of a Gospel Church, stated and settled under the Gospel manner of Administration, *this is that which Right to Baptism stands upon, and here Membership alone sufficeth thereunto.* When we say, that Members of the visible Church, Confederates &c. are to be Baptized, we must needs be understood to speak of the visible Church (or of Covenant-interest) under the *New Testament*, and Gospel-administration, which is founded upon Christ already come. And it were most absurd and irrational to understand us otherwise; we having now no other Church or Covenant to speak of, but that. Old Testament Church-membership gave right to Circumcision; New-Testament Church-membership gives right to Baptism. But at the transition from Old to New, or at the first setting up of the Gospel-administration (or *Kingdom of Heaven*, as 'tis called) and of Baptism, the entering seal thereof in *John Baptist's* and *Christ's* time, well might more be required than bare Membership in the *Jewish Church* (which was then also under great corruption, and degeneracy.) Hence all the Members of the Church of the *Jews* were not Baptized, but only those that in *some degree* embraced the new and reformed Administration: in order to which, a special Repentance was then necessary, *Mat. 3. 2.* But to infer from hence, a necessity of qualifications superadded unto Membership in stated *Christian or Gospel-Churches*, in order to Baptism-right, will not hold; there is a wide difference between the case of *Ecclesia Christiana Constituta*, and *Constituta*. In those first beginnings of the Gospel, even Pious persons, and men fearing God, such as the *Eunuch*, and *Cornelius*, must have further Instruction, and preparation, before they could be Baptized: may a man thence inferre, that now in the *Christian Church Constituted*, a Christian or Church-member that feareth God, is not Baptizable without further qualifications?

2. Much of what was required by *John Baptist* of the Members of the *Jewish Church* before he Baptized them, may be referred to the manner of Administration, and was upon that account attended in a case so circumstanced, as that was; for that by reason of their Church-state (though so degenerate as they were) they were in a farre other and neerer capacity then Non-members; and that thereby they had a Right to the ministrations of *John* and *Christ* among them, is plain from many Scriptures, *Luk. 1. 16. John 1. 11. Mat. 10. 6. & 15. 24, 26. Rom. 15. 8.* But those that were then to be Baptized (at that first Institution of Baptism, and beginning of the Gospel-administration) being adult persons, and they desisted with Scandal, and Degeneracy, yea having much lost the Truth of Doctrine in many points, hence they could not be brought to entertain that beginning of the Gospel (as 'tis called, *Mark 1. 1, 2.*) and Baptism the Sign and Seal thereof, without previous convictions, and penitential preparations by the powerful Ministry of the *Baptist*. But it doth not appear that more was pre-required of them, then what was necessary to humble submitting to the Ordinance, and to that new and reforming Administration then on foot, which was betokened and sealed thereby. And he that shall consider the multitudes that were Baptized by *John*, *Mat. 3. 5, 6. Luk. 3. 7, 21.* in the short time of his Ministry, and in those glimmerings of Gospel-light that they then had, together with the great weakness, and rawness of some that he Baptized, *John 3. 25, 26. Act. 19. 1—5.* will not think that the persons Baptized by *John* did excell those whom the Synod describeth in their fifth Proposition; of which our Brethren were so sensible in their *Anti-*

Act 8. 17, 18.
36, 37. & 10. 2.
22, 47, 48.

Presbytery.

Synodalia, pag. 18. that there they chose rather to *wave Johns Practice*, and to seek for stricter precedents, though here they plead, (and that rightly and truly) that *John's Baptism was Christian Baptism*, and holds forth a Rule unto us. As for that *Confession of sin* in *Mat. 3. 6.* when our Children do in their *Assent* to the Doctrine of Faith, and *Consent* to the Covenant, acknowledge their sin, and misery by nature, their perishing condition without Christ, &c. are willing to submit to Instruction, and Government, for the Reformation of their sins (as those that were Baptized by *John* shewed their penitential frame by that, viz. a submission to his Instructions and Counsels, *Luk. 3. 10—14.*) they cannot be denied to have somewhat of that confession of sin. So *Chemnit* on the place, *They acknowledged themselves to be sinners, and both in words, and by their action in desiring to be baptized, they professed their fear of the wrath of God, and desire to escape it.* But if any do stand guilty of *Open Scandals*, we know not why they should not make particular Confession of their sin therein, when they come to present themselves before God, and desire Baptism for their Children, if they have not done it before (so saith the same *Chemnitius* in the same place of them; *Moreover, such as stood guilty of more grievous falls, did also confess them in particular.*) To be sure, they should by the Discipline of the Church be brought to that, whether they had Children to be baptized or no, but it may be a fitting reason for it.

Chemnit. in Mat.
3. 6.

Thus there may be cause and call for a special Repentance in special cases (when persons have so carried it, as to shake their standing in the visible Church) and although the Rule owns the Child to be a Member of the Church, and so a Subject of Baptism, while it allows the Parent to be a Member not cut off; yet it is a Covenant-duty of the Parent to confess his sin in such a case: and so shall Baptism be administered with greater honour to God, and comfort to all that are concerned. But otherwise, while the Parent that was born in the Church, regularly continues in it, without Scandal, he is Ecclesiastically accounted to have the being of Repentance, and so to have the thing which *John* required of them, though not the same *modus* of Manifestation, and discovery thereof.

Now follows the fifth Reason of our Brethrens Dissent, which is this: *That which will not make a man capable of receiving Baptism himself, in case he were unbaptized, doth not make him capable of transmitting right of Baptism unto his Child: but all that the Synod hath said will not give a man Right to Baptism himself in case he were unbaptized; therefore all that the Synod hath said is not enough to make a man capable of transmitting right of Baptism unto his Child.* Whereunto is added somewhat out of *Bucer, Parker* and *Mr. Cotton*, as concurring with the judgement of our Brethren.

Ans. Taking [Capable of receiving Baptism himself, or Right to Baptism himself] for a state of Baptism-right, or Capacity, we may grant the Major, but the Minor is manifestly to be denied. But taking it for a frame of actual fitness to receive Baptism, we cannot say that we may grant the Minor, but surely the Major will not hold.

It is true, that *That which doth not put a man into a state of right to Baptism for himself in case he were unbaptized* (i. e. into a state of Church-membership) will not enable him to give Baptism-right to his Child. If the Parent be not a Member, or not in a state of Covenant interest, none of us plead for the Childs Baptism. And if he be a Member, surely he is in the state of a Subject of Baptism, or in a state of right to it (as all the Members of the visible Church are) whatever may de facto hinder it. But it is possible for an adult person, being in the state of a Member, and so of right to Baptism, to have something fail in which may hinder the actual application of Baptism to himself (in case he were unbaptized) or his actual fitness for it: And yet the same thing may not hinder a person already baptized, and standing in a Covenant-state, from conveying Baptism-right to his Child. The reason is, because the right of the Child depends upon the state of the Parent (that he be in a state of Membership: for if so, then Divine Institution carrieth or transmitteth Membership, and so Baptism-right to the Child) but the Parents regular partaking of this or that Ordinance for himself, depends much upon his own actual fitness for it. As suppose an unbaptized adult person admitted into the Church, who before he is baptized falls into some great Offence (though such a case could hardly fall out, if Baptism were administered according to the Rule, and Apostolical Practice, i. e. immediately upon first Admission, *Matth. 28. 19. Acts 16. 33.* much more is it an harsh and strange supposition for a Parent that ought to have been, and was baptized in his Infancy,

to be supposed to be *yet unbaptized* : but allowing the Proposition, that a person admitted in adult age falls into *Offence* before he is baptized) he may be called to give satisfaction for it, and to shew himself in a more serious and penitent frame before himself receive Baptism ; but suppose he die before he do that, and leave *Children* behind him, shall not they be baptized ? In like manner, if a person already baptized, yea or already in full Communion, should fall into offence, you would say that would put a stop to his own Baptism, in case (upon an impossible supposition) he were yet unbaptized ; but what Rule or Reason is there for it, to make a *particular offence* in the Parent, to cut off the *Childs* right to Baptism, whereas the Parent is (notwithstanding that offence) *still a Member*, and *within* the Church, and doth not shew any such incorrigibleness, as that he is by Rule to be put out ? when as the offence doth not cut off the *Parents* Membership, is there any reason it should cut off the *Memberships* of the *Child* ? and if it cut not off the *Childs* Membership, it doth not cut off his *right to Baptism*. Whatever may be said for requiring the Parent to *confess his sin* before his *Childs* Baptism, in reference to the more expedient and comfortable manner of Administration (therein we oppose not) yet where doth the Scripture allow us to *dissolve* the *Childs* right to Baptism upon a *particular offence* in the Parent, especially when it is not such as doth touch upon the Essentials of Christianity, and notwithstanding which, the Parent is regularly and orderly continued a Member of the Church ? It remains therefore that there may be obstructions to a Parents receiving Baptism for himself, in case he were unbaptized, which do not incapacitate a baptized Parent to transmit (if we may attribute *transmitting* to a Parent, which is properly the act of Gods Institution and Covenant) right of Baptism unto his *Child*.

But for the *Minor* or *Assumption* of the Argument in hand, it will not hold in either of the senses of the Proposition above given. For,

1. We will readily grant, that if the Parent be not in a *state of Baptism-right* himself, i. e. in a *state of Membership*, he cannot convey Baptism-right to his *Child* ; but how manifest is it, that what which the *Synod* hath said in their *fifth Proposition*, doth render the persons there described in a *state of right to Baptism* for themselves, in case they were unbaptized, viz. *In a state of Membership in the visible Church* ; for the Proposition speaks of *Church-members*, such as were admitted Members in *minority*, and do orderly and regularly so continue : and that a *state of Membership* is a *state of Baptism-right*, or that all *Church-members* are in the *state of Subjects of Baptism*, is an evident Truth that cannot be denied by any that grant the *Synods first Proposition* for which there is Sun-light in Scripture, and never was Orthodox Divine heard of that questioned it. Hence according to that *Ruled Case* here mentioned, the Parents in question having themselves a *title to Baptism*, may intitle others ; they have not onely a *title* to it, but regular and actual *possession* of it, for they are baptized, and in case they were yet unbaptized, they would, being *Church-members*, have a *title of right* unto it (they would stand possessed of an interest in a *title* to it, as Mr. Hooker in the place here alledged speaks) whatever might do so to hinder their enjoyment of it. And as *non habente potestatem*, acts are invalid ; so *ab habente potestatem* they are valid and good : but God hath full power to give forth what Grants he pleaseth, and he hath in the order of his Covenant in the visible Church, granted a Membership, and so Baptism-right unto *Children* born of Parents that are Members, and so the Parent that stands Member of the Church, hath as an instrument under God, and from his Grant, power to convey such a right unto his *Child* : *Children* are within the Covenant, because they come from Parents within the Covenant, in which they were included, and so received also by Gods faith Mr. Hooker in the place that is here cited. Survey, part. 2. pag. 18.

2. It is not to be yielded, that the Parents described by the Synod in their fifth Proposition, would not have right to Baptism themselves in case they were unbaptized, though you take [Right to Baptism] for actual and immediate *possession* for the same in *foro Ecclesiæ*. Surely he will have an hard task, who shall undertake out of Scripture, or Orthodox Divines, to shew, that *Adult persons* understanding and believing the Doctrine of Faith, and publicly professing the same, were scandalous in life, and solemnly taking hold of the Covenant, wherein they give up themselves and theirs to the Lord in his Church, and subject themselves to Christs Government therein ; that these (we say) may be denied or debarred from *Church-membership* or Baptism upon their desire thereof. It is not easy to believe, that the multitudes baptized by John Baptism and by Christ (i. e. by his Disciples at his Order) in the time of their Ministry ; or the many thousands of the Jews that were counted Believers, and baptized after Christs Ascension (too much addited unto Judaism, Acts 21. 20. & 15. 1.) or the Numbers baptized by Philip in Samaria, and by the Apostles in other places, upon a short time of Instruction, and when they were moved and taken

which *the* *unbelievers* *they* *fast* *wrought*, and of whom many *great* *corrupt* *and* *degenerate* *afford* *ward* (as the *Epistles* *to* *the* *Galatians*, *Corinthians*, and other places *show*) That they did (we say) (at least many of them) excell the persons described in the *Synods* *fifth* *Proposition*, taking all things together: or that they had more to render them *visible* *Believers* upon a just account than these have.

But it is a strange Reason that is here rendered by our Brethren, why that which is set down by the *Synod* would not render a person a Subject of Baptism, viz. Because [a man may be an unbeliever, and yet come up to all that the *Synod* hath said in their *fifth* *Proposition*] We suppose *Simon Magus*, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, and many others, not only might be, but were unbelievers, and yet were regularly baptized. We marvel what outward signs and professions of Faith which the Church may proceed upon, can be given, but a man [may be] an unbeliever, and yet come up unto them? If it be said, that a man may come up to all that the *Synod* hath said, and yet be Ecclesiastically judged a *visible* *unbeliever*, shew us any ground for such a judgement.

Touching the Opinion of *Bucer* & *Parker*, here cited out of *Park's de Pol. Eccl. Lib. 3. p. 181, 182.*
1. In the first passage the word [Apparent] is here added, the words in *Parker* are only [Signes of Regeneration] and the other passage in pag. 182. runs thus: A confession of Faith, though publick and solemn, may not be received in Churches, quando nulla necessaria Fidei signa apparent, ubi et in necessary Signs of Faith do appear: where by necessary Signs of Faith, are not meant such signs as have a necessary Connection with Faith, or do necessarily (i. e. infallibly, and certainly) Argue that there is Truth of saving Faith in the heart; such Signs men cannot see or judge of, but when there is such an appearance, as that if that be in reality which doth appear to be (on which seems to be in outward appearance) then there is true Faith; this is that appearance of necessary Signs of Faith which he means; hence within seven lines of the place cited, the same thing is thus expressed: quantumvis probabilis Argumentis, &c. when as we are by no probable Arguments given to believe that it is in the Heart.

2. The thing there specially blamed by *Bucer* and *Parker*, is, when a bare Verbal Profession is accepted, though accompanied with a Scandalous life; and when there is not regard had to the conversation, as well as to the Oral Confession, as the Discourse in the place cited at large shews.

3. But that which we would chiefly insist on for Answer, is, That *Bucer* and *Parker* do there plainly speak of such a Confirmation (or owning men as confirmed Members) as doth import their Admission to the Lords Table, or into full Communion (as we Phrase it) and hence do blame the Prelatical way for so much slightness therein: so *Mr. Cotton* cites this place of *Bucer* (a). And so *Parker* a little before this citation of *Bucer* complains, That although by the English order (if I mistake not, saith he) he that is confirmed, is capable of the Lords Supper; yet notwithstanding, such are confirmed, if they can but say the Catechism, who cannot examine themselves, nor rightly prepare themselves for the Table of the Lord. Now it is well known, that in our Admissions unto full Communion, we are not behind in any thing that *Bucer* and *Parker* do require, but do expect positive comfortable Signs of Regeneration already wrought, and some experienced fruits thereof; whereby persons may be in some measure fit for that Special and comfortable Exercise of Grace that is required in preparation for, and participation of the Lords Table. But suppose that persons born in the Church, and baptized, be not yet come up to this, is there any word to be found in *Bucer* or *Parker*, or in any Judicious Orthodox Divine, that they lose their Membership, and are put out of the Church merely because they are not come up to this, when as no censurable wickedness is found in them? And while the Parents stand in the Church, his Infant-child is in the Church also, and therefore Baptizable. Yet without we say, with the consent of Judicious Divines, that while persons have a regular standing in the Church, they are in Ecclesiastical account to be looked upon as having the Being of Regeneration, or as Fideles, vocati, and so regenerati, i. e. by reason of their federal Holiness, though not by particular, present, evident Signs of a work of Grace already wrought in them: in this case we take their Covenant-Grace, Christian Education, Hospitable Carriage, general Profession, &c. for Signs of Regeneration in this sense, i. e. such as shew that there may be Grace, there is nothing inconsistent with Grace, and none knows but a seed of Grace (which in the first infusion, and beginnings of it, is marvelous secret and small) may lie at bottom; and hence the Church is to carry toward them as Houses of Grace. But it is a further thing for Grace to appear above-ground in such Exercise and sensible Signs, Evidences and Experiences, as may fit them for comfortable Communion with Christ in the Supper.

But Fourthly, if the judgement of *Bucer* and *Parker* may be taken in this Controversie, it will soon

(a) Holm.
of Church-
members,
pag. 41.

Bonè autē
servare nos
in genere,
de his omni-
bus qui ex
fidelibus
nascuntur,
& fidei
formula in-
definita ju-
bet: & cō-
vitiā monet
Bez quant.
de Sacram.
q. 123.

Not be at all: for, notwithstanding all that is here, or can be cited of theirs, it is evident enough that *Famous Martin Bucer*, and *Renowned Parker*; (as the Preface styleth them, and that deservedly) do fully concur with the *Synod* in extending Baptism to such as the *Synod* describes, or to more then so. *Vld. Bucer de regno Christi*, Lib. 1. Cap. 2. pag. 14. And in his Commentary upon *John*, in an excellent discourse concerning Infant-Baptism, among many other useful Passages, he hath these following. *Sunt quidem sæpe inter pueros Reprobis, &c.* There are indeed often among Children some that be Reprobates, but while that does not appear to us, we ought nevertheless to reckon them among the People of God; and we shall time enough cast them out, when by their evil fruits they shall openly shew us what they are. *Bucer in Joh. fol. 43.* And in another place, *Quantum equidem assequi possum, &c.* As far as I can gather (saith he) the Anabaptists' onely reason why they dislike Infant-baptism, is. Because they fancy to themselves that the Church would be more pure, if we baptized none but the adult, and such as bold forth evidence of the Spirit: and so they think but a few would have place in Churches. But by this means doubtless it would come to pass, that many of Christs Sheep would be neglected as Goats: neither would all Parents be so careful as they think, in educating their Children unto piety. And yet this humane thought (which savours of too much esteem of our own works) doth so possess them, that they bring all to this; and turn off all that can be said, and hereby they run themselves into very great errors. I called it an humane thought, for no Scripture doth command such a curious circumspection; lest any Goats should be received into the Church. The Apostles often baptized persons with whom they had scarce had an hours speech concerning Christ; because, according to the Parable of the Gospel, they would bring in all they met with to the Marriage (Mat. 22. 10.) For by Baptism they only took them into the School of Piety, and Trained-band of Christians; and they were wont then to cast them out again, when it was evidently enough perceived that to labour in teaching them was in vain. *Ibid. fol. 53.*

As for Parker, his speaking mainly against the admitting or tolerating of [*Manifestarii peccatores*] The notoriously wicked, and pleading to have them debarred from the Lords Table, or cast out by the use of Discipline (a): His frequent approbation of the Principles of the Reformed Church (b); And in special his approving of their admitting Members (not before of their Body) upon such like qualifications as are contained in the *Synods fifth Proposition* (c). Also his earnest and peremptory rejecting the Opinions and Principles of the Anabaptists and Separatists; and declaring himself and the Non-Conformists, whose Cause he acted; to be farre from them (d). These and such like do clearly shew that Worthy man to be no Opponent of such an extent of Baptism as is contained in the Conclusions of the Synod.

But here our Brethren will needs take notice, that the judgment of that worthy and for ever famous Mr. Cotton was as theirs is, because he hath these words, (in Holiness of Church-members, pag. 94.) I conceive (under favour) more positive fruits of Regeneration are required in the Church-members of the New Testament, then of the Old.

Ans. The Reader will take notice of what hath been before said, and cited to shew Mr. Cottons judgement in the Points controverted between our Brethren and the Synod, and will easily thereby judge whether Mr. Cottons judgement was as theirs is: but it is strange they should make such a Collection from what is here set down. Mr. Cotton might say those words that are here expressed, and yet his judgement be farre enough from being as theirs is in any of the Points that are controverted: for we shall not gainsay this Conception of Mr. Cottons [That more positive fruits of Regeneration are required in the Church-members of the New Testament, then of the Old] but concur with it in two respects, or for two causes: 1. Because the Light now is greater and clearer then it was then, and where more is given, more is required, Luke 12. 48. 2. Because the Discipline appointed under the Old Testament was mostly Ceremonial (*Ames Medul. lib. 1. c. 38. Thef. 4. r.*) And whether Excommunication for Moral evils, was then used, at least out of the National Church, is by some doubted: As also whether persons were debarred from the holy things simply for Moral evils, if they were ceremonially clean; as Mr. Cotton in the place here alledged saith. It is true, that it is a question whether sins very scandalous did keep men ceremonially clean from the Temple and Sacrifices: But under the New Testament we have a plain and undoubted Rule, for the Censure of Excommunication for Moral evils persisted in: hence persons might haply run further into Moral evils (and so further off from the fruits of Regeneration) then, and yet not be put out of the Church (yea haply not be debarred from the holy things) then they can do now. But what is all this to the matter in hand? for still it is not secret ir regeneration, nor the bare want of such and such positive fruits of Regeneration, without positive and palpable fruits of Ir regeneration, that will (according to any Rule God hath given us) put any man out of the

(a) *De Politi. Eccles. Lib. 3. pag. 168, 169.* (b) *De Politi. Eccles. Lib. 1. cap. 29. & Lib. 3. pag. 167.* Protestat. before Treat. of the Cross. (c) *De Politi. Lib. 3. pag. 171.* (d) *Ibid. Lib. 1. cap. 13. & 14. & Lib. 3. pag. 166.* And of the Cross, Cap. 9. *Jeſu. 3.*

Holiness of
Church-
members,
Pag 92.

the Church, when he is once in. Nay, Mr. Cotton, in the very place here cited, expressly saith, that Irregeneration alone will not keep a man out: His words are these (Neither amongst us doth Irregeneration alone keep any from Church-fellowship with us: not Irregeneration alone, I say) unless it be accompanied with such fruits as are openly scandalous, and do convincingly manifest Irregeneration.) Moreover, still the parallel between the Church of the Old and of the New Testament, stands and holds in this, that when a person is once by Gods appointment taken into the visible Church (whether in adult age or in infancy, it comes all to one for that) he continues in it, and doth not lose his Membership, till by some Rule or Appointment of God in his Word he be cut off or cast out. What the particular Rules and ways of cutting off were in the Old Testament, we need not here dispute, but to be sure the plain Rule in the New Testament for the cutting off of particular persons, is by the Censure of Excommunication for Moral evils.

(b) Medul.
Lib. 1. cap.
40. p. 165. 13

But while we grant that in some respects more positive fruits in regard of degree might be required in the Old Testament, let none so understand it, as if Regeneration was not required as an unto the Constitution and Continuation of the visible Church in the Old Testament, but that a mere carnal succession was then allowed of without regard to Regeneration. For they stood by Faith, and were taken off by Unbelief as well as we, Rom. 11. Circumcision was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, as well as Baptism. Faith and Regeneration do not now more constitute the Covenant of God, then it did in the time of Abraham, who was the Father of the Faithful, saith Dr. Ames (b). Yea, our Brethren do in their Antisynodalia, pag. 17. expressly say, That the Covenant made with Abraham, and the Circumcision of his seed, was appointed upon the same terms that Baptism was, i. e. that he should walk with God by Faith and Obedience. And it is observable, that no where is Regeneration, and the fruits thereof, required of Gods Covenant-people in stricter and fuller terms then in the Old Testament, Gen. 17. 1. Deut. 10. 12. & 26. 16, 17. 1 Kings 8. 22. Psal. 124. 17, 18. Isa. 56. 4, 6. And yet the Lord, who is the best interpreter of his own Rules, continued them in the Church, and accounted them among the number of his holy people, till visible, and incontestable fruits of Irregeneration were found with them: and to he doth now.

In the sixth Place: The Application (with the Preface) of the Seal of Baptism unto those who are not true Believers (we mean visibly, for de occultis non judicat Ecclesia) is a profanation thereof, and as dreadful a sin as if a man should administer the Lords Supper unto unworthy receivers. We marvel that any should think that the Blood of Christ is not as much profaned and violated by undue Administration of Baptism, as by undue administration of the Lords Supper.

Ans. It will be hard for the Reader to gather out of all that is here said, a Reason of dissent from the Synod: for we readily grant and say, that Baptism is not to be applied to any but visible Believers (taking visible Believers as a term equivalent to [Federally Holy] as the term Believer or Faithful is sometimes in Scripture so taken; Isai. 1. 21. 2 Cor. 6. 15. and often in Authors) but that the persons in question, both Parents and Children, are visible Believers, is also by the Synod asserted and proved; and here is nothing said to disprove it. But when as our Brethren here say, that the Application of the Seal of Baptism unto those who are not visibly true Believers, is a profanation thereof (in which, being rightly explained, we gain say them not) and yet in their Antisynodalia, pag. 20. do hold forth, That Infants neither have nor can have Faith; It will lie upon them to shew how they apply the seal of Baptism to Infants without a profanation thereof. It is pity that so many passages are dropt here and there, that do (though we hope not in their Intention) clash with the baptizing of Infants. Here is also express a marvel, that any should think, &c. But we may Answer with a marvel that any should think as if any of us did think that the Blood of Christ is not profaned by undue administration of Baptism, as well as by undue administration of the Lords Supper: whether as much or no in point of degree, we will not trouble our selves to dispute; though we suppose the degree of sinful pollution or profanation of the Lords Name in any Ordinance, will be intended by the degree of special Communion that we have with Christ in that Ordinance, and by the danger that such pollution infers to the whole Church: as well as to the particular partaker, which will hardly be denied to be more in the Lords Supper then in Baptism. But whether the profanation be as great or no, to be sure it is very great, and so great as that every Pious Conscientious person should fear to have any hand in the undue administration of Baptism. But where is there any thing to shew that the administration of Baptism, pointed to by the Synod, is undue? or that it is an undue Administration of Baptism to extend it further then the Lords Supper? or to administer Baptism to some unto whom we do not administer the Lords Supper? If the Rule and Institution concerning these two Sacraments

ments do extend the one further then the other, as it plainly doth, when it appoints Baptism to all Disciples, or to run parallel with federal Holiness, *Mat. 28. 19.* but the Lords Supper onely to Self-examining Disciples, *1 Cor. 11. 28.* then the one may be extended further then the other, and yet the administration of the one no more undue, or irregular, and polluting then the Administration of the other. Surely he that holds, That Baptism may, and the Lords Supper may not be administered unto Infants (as we suppose our Brethren do) he grants that Baptism may be extended further then the Lords Supper, without any such sacrilegious impiety, dreadful profanation or prostitution of the Blood of Christ, as is here (harshly enough) expressed. Neither did judicious Calvin (part of whose zealous expression against the promiscuous Administration of the Lords Supper, is here cited in the Preface) ever imagine or conceive that it was any such profanation to extend Baptism further then the Lords Supper, yea and further then the Synod doth, when as he set down that Answer in his *Catechism* that is above alleged, and practised accordingly. It is well known the Synod doth not plead for that largeness in either of the Sacraments that Calvin allowed: But to extend the one further then the other, was never accounted sacrilegious impiety in Orthodox Divinity.

It is here added; that *Austin* pleads for strictness in the Administration of Baptism, and *Tertullian* be're him. But did either of them plead for greater strictness then the Synod doth? unless where *Tertullian* erroneously and weakly pleads for the delaying of Baptism, which is noted (c) for one of his *navi*. Certainly men will say when they look upon what is published by the Synod, and their many qualifying of the fifth Proposition (about which the controversy is) that they were for much strictness in the administration of Baptism, and many will think us too strict. We doubt not but we may safely say, that no man can shew any thing out of *Austin* that will speak him to be against the baptizing of such as the Synod pleadeth for: yea, he requireth not more of adult Converts from Heathenism, for their own Baptism, then is in the Parents who are described by the Synod. That Book of his de *Fide & Operibus*, is against the baptizing of notorious scandalous livers, whom he would not have baptized (though seemingly turned from Heathenism) till they seriously promised reformation. But that *Austin* (in stead of being for more strictness) holdeth for a larger extent of Baptism then the Synod doth, might easily be evinced (d).

How strange is it to see their Authority still alleged against us, who are not only fully with us in this matter, but go further then we!

The seventh Reason of our Brethrens dissent, is this; It hath in it a natural tendency to the hardning of unregenerate Creatures, in their sinful natural condition, when Life is not onely promised, but sealed to them by the precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Baptism is a Seal of the whole Covenant of Grace, (e) as well as the Lords Supper and therefore those that are not interested in this Covenant by Faith, ought not to have the Seal thereof applied to them.

Ans. 1. The Lords Truth and Grace, however it may be abused by the corruption of mans perverse and sinful nature, hath not in it self any natural tendency to harden any, but the contrary. And how can the Doctrine in hand have any such natural tendency? when as men are told over and over, that onely outward advantages and dispensations are sealed to them in Baptism more absolutely (*Rom. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4.*) but the saving benefits of the Covenant (or Life Eternal) conditionally (see Mr. *Shepard's* late Printed Letter, pag. 3—6.) so that if they fail of the condition (viz. eff. Qual. and unfeigned faith) they miss of Salvation, notwithstanding their Baptism, and external Covenant-estate: And hence, that there is no certainty, but onely a probable connexion between federal Holyness (as applied to particular persons) and Salvation; that Thousands are in the visible Church that shall never see Heaven; That outward Priviledges are not to be relied on, but improved as helps and encouragements to the obtaining of internal and special Grace: that the Church is to accept of probable signs, but no man for his self is to rest without certain Signs of Grace: Hence the indefinite promise, and other general indefinite tokens of a good estate, &c. such as decypher that sort of persons that are gracions, and many of whom are so, though many are not, (as Children of the Covenant, Professors of the Faith &c.) These are grounds for the Church to proceed upon in the dispensation of outward Ordinance, especially that of Baptism, that is annexed to the first being of Grace; but they are not grounds for any to rest or acquiesce in, as to the Salvation of their own souls. In sum, while we keep a due distinction between the outward and inward dispensation of the Covenant, and between the respective conditions and grounds of each, there is no tendency unto hardning therein; but in-

(c) Magdeb. Cent. 3. pag. 83.

(d) Sicut ergo tempore illius Sacramenti, de Circumcisi qui nascere-
tur circumcidiendi sunt; sic nunc
de Baptizato qui natus fuerit, bap-
tizandus est. August. tom. 7. cont.
Pelag. Lib. 2. cap. 25. See also
Tom. 2. Epist. 23. ad Bonificium;
& Epist. 75. ad Auxilius. And
De Grat. & Lib. Arbitr. cap. 22.

(e) Ames
Medull. lib.
1. cap. 40.
thes. 5.

and when men upon *these* terms, and do tye visible Church-interest unto such conditions and qualifications, as are reputed enough to Salvation, this may tend to harden men, and to make them conceit, that if once they be got into the Church, they are sure of Heaven, when as this it may be they are far from it.

2. The Scriptures give us a contrary Assertion to this of our Brethren here; for they tell us, that to deny the Children of the Church, to have any part in the Lord, hath a strong tendency in it, to make them cease from fearing the Lord, or to harden their hearts from his fear, *Josh.* 22. 24, 25, 27. and that on the other hand, the encouragements and awful obligations of Covenant-interest do greatly tend to soften and break the heart, and to draw it home unto God. Hence the Lord often begins with this, that He is their God (viz. in outward Covenant) and they his People, when he would most powerfully win and draw them to Faith and Obedience, *Psal.* 81. 8, 10. *Levit.* 19. 3, 4. *Deut.* 14. 1, 2. *Hos.* 14. 1. *Alt.* 2. 38, 39. and the Experiences of many can through Grace witness unto this, or what use the consideration of the Lords preventing Grace in his sealed Covenant, and their engagement to him thereby hath been in the day of their turning unto God, so *Jer.* 31. 18. & 3. 22. *Gal.* 1. 15.

3. There is a natural tendency in mans corrupt heart (not in this, or any other Truth or Ordinance of God) that leads him to turn Grace into wantonness, and to abuse outward Privileges and Ordinances, unto a self-hardning security and carnal confidence, *Jer.* 7. 4. *Mat.* 3. 9. *Rom.* 2. 17. *Phil.* 3. 4, 5, 6, 7. but is this any Argument against the Lord's or the Churches giving men a portion in his Temple and Ordinances, because they are prone so to abuse them? Confidence in outward visible qualifications for full communion, is but a vain and carnal thing; yet men are prone enough to it, and had need by the Ministry be taken off from it. But shall we therefore deny or scruple their Admission thereunto?

4. If one should bring such an Argument as this against the baptizing of Infants, viz. That it will burden them, and bolster them up in their sinful natural condition; we suppose it would be counted a poor Argument, and of no validity; and yet it holds as well against the baptizing of any Infants, as of these in question. If it be said, that the baptizing of these in question burdens the Parent? Ans. Not at all (in the way we go) any more with reference to his Childs Baptism, then in reference to his own Baptism which he received in Infancy. For it doth not necessarily affirm that he hath any more then federal Holiness, and that he had, when he was an Infant, on that ground was he Baptized then, and on the same ground is his Child Baptized now. If he have any more, he may have the more comfort in it; but simply to have his Child Baptized, on the grounds we go upon, affirms no more but this, because we ground all upon federal Holiness, or Membership in the visible Church.

It is true, that Baptism is a Seal of the whole Covenant of Grace, as well as the Lords Supper: But it is as true, 1. That it is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, as dispensed in the visible Church, or it is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, as clothed with the external dispensation or administration thereof, and so it doth nextly and immediately Seal the external dispensation, or the Promises and Privileges that belong thereto (which are a part of the whole Covenant of Grace) and then it seals the inward and saving benefits of the Covenant as included in that dispensation, and upon the Conditions therein propounded. Baptism seals the whole Covenant, and whole dispensation thereof, i. e. 1. The dispensation of it Outwardly, to all that have an external standing in the Church. 2. The dispensation and communication of it Inwardly, Effectually and Savingly to all that truly do believe.

2. That Baptism is a Seal of Entrance into the Covenant thus considered. It seals the whole Covenant, but by way of Initiation; so Dr. Ames in the place that is here quoted, *Medul. Lib.* 1. Cap. 40. *Thef.* 5. 6. Baptism is the Sacrament of Initiation, or Regeneration, for although it do at once seal the whole Covenant of Grace to the Faithful, yet by a singular appropriation represents and confirms our very ingrafting into Christ, *Rom.* 6. 3, 5. *1 Cor.* 12. 13. And *Thef.* 10. Those Benefits are sealed by way of Initiation, in Baptism: And from thence the judicious Doctor makes that Inference that suits and clears the matter in hand, *Thef.* 11. Hence Baptism ought to be administered to all those, unto whom the Covenant of Grace belongs, because it is the first Seal of the Covenant now first entered into. Baptism is the Seal of Entrance into Covenant, sealing up unto the party baptized, all the good of the Covenant to be in season communicated and enjoyed, from step to step, through the whole progress of Christianity, from this first beginning thereof, according to the Tenour and Order of the Covenant. Hence it belongs to all that are within the Covenant, or that have but a first entrance therinto, Children as well as others, though they have not yet such faith and growth, as imports that progress in the Covenant, and fruition

of the Core and Fruits thereof that is sealed up in the Lords Supper.

We readily grant, and say [*That must needs so have the Seal of Baptism applied to them, as those that are interested in the Covenant*] and that by Faith, unless you can shew us any other way of Interest in the Covenant, but by Faith. But witball, we affirm and prove, That the Children in question have interest in the Covenant, according to the known tenour thereof, Gen. 17. 7. and therefore that the Seal of Baptism is to be applied to them. In all this therefore we see no sufficient Ground or Reason to necessitate a Dissent from the Synod.

Our Brethren have one thing more yet to add; viz. *That there is Danger of great Corruption and Pollution creeping into the Churches, by the Enlargement of the Subject of Baptism.*

Ans. 1. And is there no danger of Corruption by Over-straining the Subject of Baptism? Certainly it is a Corruption to take from the Rule, as well as to add to it; and a Corruption that our weakness is in danger of. And it is a dangerous thing to be guilty of breaking Gods Covenant, by not applying the Initiating Seal unto those it is appointed for, even unto all that are in Covenant, Gen. 17. 9, 10, 14. Moses found danger in it, Exod. 4. 24. Is there no danger of putting those out of the visible Church, whom Christ would have kept in? and depriving them of those Church-advantages (Rom. 3. 12.) that might help them toward Heaven? Even Christs own Disciples may be in danger of incurring His displeasure, by keeping poor little ones away from him, Mark 10. 13, 14. To go pluck up all the Tares was a wondrous motion, and had a good intention, but the Householder concludes, there's danger in it of plucking up the Wheat also.

2. If the enlargements be beyond the bounds of the Rule, it will bring in corruption, else not; our work is therefore to study the Rule and keep close to that, as the only true way to the Churches Purity and Glory. To go aside from that to the Right hand will bring corruption as well as to go to the left; The way of Anabaptists, viz. to admit none to Membership and Baptism but adult Professors, is the strictest way, and one would think it should be a way of great Purity, but Experience hath abundantly shewed the contrary; that it hath been an inlet to great corruption, and looseness both in Doctrine and Practice, and a troublesome dangerous underminer of Reformation. It is the Lords own way, and his Institutions only, which he will bless, and not mans Inventions, though never so plausible: neither hath God (in his wisdom) so instituted the frame of his Covenant, and the constitution of the Church thereby, as to make a perfect separation between good and bad, or to make the work of Conversion, and initial Instruktion needless in the Churches. Conversion is to the Children of the Covenant a fruit of the Covenant, saith Mr Cotton (b). If we do not keep in the way of a Converging Grace-giving Covenant, and keep persons under those Church-dispensations wherein Grace is given, the Church will dye of a Lingring, though not of a Vicious death. The Lord hath not let up Churches onely that a few old Christians may keep one another warm while they live, and then carry away the Church into the cold grave with them when they dye: no, but that they might, with all the care, and with all the Obligations, and Advantages to that care that may be, nurse up still successively another Generation of Subjects to Christ that may stand up in his Kingdom when they are gone, that so he might have a People and Kingdome successively continued to him from one Generation to another. We may be very injurious to Christ as well as to the Souls of men, by too much straitning, and narrowing the bounds of his Kingdome or visible Church here on Earth. Certainly enlargement, so it be a regular enlargement thereof, is a very desirable thing: it is a great honour to Christ to have many willing Subjects (as these are desirous and desirous to be under the Government of Christ that we plead for) and very suitable to the Spirit and Grace of Christ in the Gospel. In Church-reformation, it is an observable Truth (saith Pareus on the Parable of the Tares) That those that are for too much strictness, do more hurt then profit the Church. See Diadote on Matt. 13. 29. Cyrian. Epist. 51.

3. There is apparently a greater danger of Corruption to the Churches by enlarging the Subjects of full Communion, and admitting unqualified, or meanly qualified persons to the Lords Table and Voting in the Church, whereby the interest of the power of Godliness will soon be prejudiced, and Elections, Admissions, Censures, so carried, as will be hazardous thereunto. Now it is evident, that this, and will be the Temptation, viz. to over-enlarge full Communion, if Baptism be limited to the Children of such as are admitted thereunto. And it is ealie to observe, that many of the Reasonings of our Brethren, and others are more against the Non-admission of the Parents in question to full Communion, then against the Admission of their Children to Baptism. Now unreasonable is it then to object against us as Corruptors of the Churches, when we stand for

b) Grounds and Ends of Infant-baptism, p. 28, 29.

Prov. 24. 28.
Psa. 110. 3.

a greater *strictness* than they in that wherein the main danger of Church-corrupting lyes? We doubt not to affirm, That that Principle which hath been held forth by our Brethren, viz. *That if the Church can have any hope of persons, that they have any thing of Faith and Grace in them, though never so little, they ought, being adults, to be admitted to full Communion*] this we say will, if followed, bring corruptions and impurities into Churches: for he must abandon all the Rules of Charity, that cannot hope this of multitudes of young persons that grow up among us, who yet if they were presently admitted to full Communion, we should soon feel a change in the management of Church-affairs; and the Interest of Formality and common Profession, would soon be advanced above the Interest of the power of Godliness. Whether we be in the right in this matter of *strictness* as to full Communion, Scripture and Reason must determine (and were this the place of that dispute, we have much to lay in it, and to be sure, the Practice of these Churches hitherto hath been for it, as also their Profession in the Synod in 1648. Platform of Discipline, Cap. 12. Sect. 7. Hence to depart from that, would be a real departure from our former Practice and Profession: Whereas to Enlarge Baptism to the Children of all that stand in the Church, is but a progress to that Practice that suits with our Profession) But certain it is that we are, and stand for the Purity of the Churches, when as we stand for such qualifications as we do, in those we would admit to full Communion; and do withstand those Notions and Reasonings that would inferre a Laxness therein, which hath apparent peril in it. But we can hardly imagine what hurt it would do, or what danger of spoiling the Churches there is in it, for poor Children to be taken within the verge of the Church, under the wings of Christ in his Ordinances, and to be under Church-care, and Discipline and Government for their Souls good; to be in a state of Initiation and Education in the Church of God, and consequently to have Baptism, which is the Seal of Initiation; when as they shall not come to the Lords Table, nor have any hand in the Management of Church-affairs (as Elections of Officers, Admissions, and Censures of Members) untill as a fruit of the foresaid help and means, they attain to such qualifications as may render their admission into full Communion safe and comfortable, both to their own Souls, and to the Churches.

In sum, we make account, that if we keep Baptism within the compass of the Non-excommunicable, and the Lords Supper within the compass of those that have (unto Charity) somewhat of the Power of Godliness (or Grace in exercise) we shall be near about the right Middle-way of Church-Reformation. And as for the Preservation of due Purity in the Church, it is the due Exercise of Discipline that must do that, as our Divines unanimously acknowledge, for that is Gods own appointed way (and the Lord make and keep us all careful and faithful therein) not the Curtailing of the Covenant, which may be man's way; but is not the way of God wherein alone we may expect his Blessing.

The good Lord pardon the Imperfections and Failings that attend us in these Debates; accept of what is according to his Will, and establish it; save us from corrupting Extremes on either hand, and give unto his People one Heart and one Way to fear Him for ever, for the good of them and of their Children after them.

ERRATA in the Book following.

Page 12. Line 18. their Infancy, read from Infancy. pag. 22. lin. 16. he added r. here added. pag. 49. lin. 4. there r. here. pag. 53. lin. 35. his r. this. pag. 60. lin. 7. of that r. of the. pag. 66. lin. 1. do run r. do not run. pag. 98. lin. 11. do administer r. so administer. In Answer to the Preface. pag. 11. lin. 33. mor r. more. pag. 16. lin. 14. into r. unto.

DEFENCE

OF THE
ANSWER and ARGUMENTS of the SYNOD,
Met at Boston in the Year 1662.

Concerning

The Subject of Baptism, and Consociation of Churches:

Against the *REPLY* made thereto, by the Reverend Mr. John
Davenport, in his Treatise, Entituled,

Another ESSAY for Investigation of the Truth, &c.



HE Reverend Author in this his *Essay*, before he come
to speak to that which the Synod delivered, doth pre-
mise Eleven or Twelve *Positions*, by which (he saith)
“the determinations of the Synod are to be Examined, and
“so far, and no further to be approved and received, as a

“consent and harmony of them with these may be cleared, &c. pag. 8.

Concerning which *Positions* we will not say much, because the
Intendment in this *Defence*, is onely to clear what is said by the
Synod, against what this Reverend Author saith against the same in
his *R^p*; and therefore untill he speak to what the Synod deli-
vered, we think it not needful to insist long upon these premised
Positi^ons. Onely this we may say concerning them, That though
su^r-dry things in them be sound and good, yet the *Positi^ons* them-
selves being not Scripture, but his own private Collections, there-

But we do not see that we are bound to take these *Positions*, as the Standard and Rule, by which to judge of what the Synod saith: But if the Synod's Doctrine be agreeable to Scripture, we think that may be sufficient for defence thereof, whether it agree with the premised *Positions*, or not. And when himself, pag. 1. doth commend it as a good Profession in the Synod, that, *To the Law and to the Testimony they do wholly referre themselves*; had it not been also commendable in him to have done the like, rather than to lay down *Positions* (though he conceives them rightly deduced from Scripture) and then to say, *Nothing is to be approved further than it consents with those Positions*? Himself may please to consider of this.

But to leave this of the premised *Positions*, and to come to the main Business; Concerning The Subject of Baptism, the first Proposition of the Synod is this, viz.

They that according to Scripture are Members of the visible Church, are the Subjects of Baptism:

The second is this; viz.

The Members of the visible Church according to Scripture, are Confederate visible Believers, in particular Churches, and their Infants, i. e. Children in minority; whose next Parents, one or both, are in Covenant.

Now what saith the Reverend Author to these? That which he saith, is this: "I cannot approve the two first Propositions, without some change of the terms: In the first, thus; *They that according to Christ's Ordinance, are regular and actual Members, &c.* The second, thus; *The actual and regular Members of the visible Church, according to Christ's Ordinance, &c.* pag. 9.

Answer. So that the Alteration required, is, That in stead of [Scripture] it be said [Christ's Ordinance] and in stead of [Members] [Actual and regular Members]. But a necessity of this Alteration doth not appear: for, as for the one particular, can we think, that there is any such difference between the Scripture, and the Ordinance of Christ, that men may be Members of the visible Church, and so Subjects of Baptism, according to the former, and yet not according to the latter? If it be according to the Scripture, may it not be said to be according to Christ's Ordinance? Sure, when Christ him-
self

Self bids us Search the Scripture, Job. 33. and when the Bereans are commended for searching the Scripture, whether these things were so, which were Preached by Paul, Acts 17. 11. and when all the Scripture is for our learning, Rom. 15. 4. and doth contain a perfect Rule in all things that concern Gods Worship, whether Natural, or Instituted, as this Reverend Author saith, in the first of his pre-mised Positions; upon these grounds it may seem, that what is according to Scripture, needs not to want our approbation, for fear lest it agree not with the Ordinance of Christ. And indeed, how can that be taken for an Ordinance of Christ, which is not according to Scripture? that being considered also, which is said by the Reverend Author in his second Position, That whatsoever Christ did institute in the Christian Churches, he did it by Gods appointment, as Moses by Gods appointment, gave out what he delivered in the Church of Israel. Now if all that is instituted by Christ, be according to Gods appointment, and that the Scripture contains a perfect Rule concerning all Instituted Worship, and so concerning all Gods appointments; it may seem a needless thing to withhold our approbation from that which is according to Scripture, as if it might be so, and yet not be according to the Ordinance of Christ. Besides, how shall we know a thing to be an Ordinance of Christ, if it be not according to the Scripture?

And for the other Alteration desired, that in stead of [Members] it be [Regular and actual Members] may we think that men may, or can be Members according to Scripture, and not Regular, nor actual Members? If the Scripture be the Rule, and a perfect Rule, then they that are Members according to Scripture, are Members according to Rule, and so are Regular members. And if Actual be contradistinct from Potentiall; then they that are Members according to Scripture, are Actual members, and not onely Potentiall, or potentially such: for, such potential Members the Scripture approveth not. Upon these grounds, we see no necessity of the Alteration fore-mentioned.

* Propos. 3. The Infant-seed, &c. when grown up are personally under the Watch, Discipline, and Government of the Church.

Arg. 1. Children were under Patriarchall and Mosaical discipline of old, &c.

A 2

Reply.

2122 *Reply.* The Texts *alleged* (viz. Gen. 18. 19. & 21. 9. 10. 12. "and Gal. 5. 3.) *do not prove the Antecedent, viz. That children were* " *under Patriarchal and Mosaiacal discipline, p. 10.*

Ans. And yet for the one of these, the Reverend Author confesseth, in Answer to this Argument, pag. 11, 12. " *That the members of* " *the Church in the Patriarch's Families, were to continue in communion* " *with the Church from their being circumcised, all the dayes of their life,* " *untill they were cast out, as Ishmael; or voluntarily departed from* " *it, as Esau.* And doth not this sufficiently imply, That children in those Churches, when adult, were under Discipline in those Churches? For, can we think that those Churches had no Church-discipline in them? or that the Members of them were not under that Discipline? or the children, when grown up, were not Members? Sure, if they continued in communion with the Church from their being circumcised, all the dayes of their life, untill they were cast out, or did voluntarily go away; then it was not meer growing up to be adult, that caused their Church-relation, or communion with the Church, to cease. And if their communion with the Church did not cease, but continue, how can it be avoided but they were under Church-discipline? Where shall we finde ground from Scripture or good Reason, that these children, when adult, did still continue in communion with the Church, and yet were not under the Church-discipline that then was? It seems to us, that the one of these, which the Reverend Author doth expressly affirm, doth unavoidably imply the other, which is affirmed by the Synod. There might be many children in those Families of the Patriarchs, who when they were adult, were neither cast out, as Ishmael, nor departed, as Esau; and these continuing in communion with the Church all the dayes of their life, from their being circumcised, as the Reverend Author saith they did, they were therefore under the Church-discipline that then was. And if they might be cast out, as Ishmael was, Gen. 21. as the Reverend Author confesseth; it cannot be denied but that there was Discipline in those Churches, and that children, when grown up, were subject thereto: For, as for that which the Reverend Author suggesteth, pag. 11. " *Tout Ishmael being thirteen* " *years old, when he was circumcised, was then, admitted into Church-* fellowship.

*"fellowship and full communion by his personal Covenanting, being at
 "years of discretion. The Answer is, That it is very unusual that
 children at thirteen years of age should be fit for full communion.
 And as for Ishmael, there is no such thing testified of him in the
 Scripture; but on the contrary, when the Lord saith, He should be
 a wilde man, in his hand against every man, and every mans hand
 against him, Gen. 16. & when as he soon after became such a Mocker
 and Persecutor, Gen. 21. Gal. 4. as that for it he was cast out, Gen. 21.
 it is therefore not very probable that he at thirteen years of age had
 so much goodness in him, as that upon the profession thereof he
 should then be admitted to full communion. It seems to us more
 probable, considering the things mentioned, that he was admitted as
 a child in minority, by virtue of the Covenant with Abraham and his
 seed: and yet when grown up, he was so under Discipline, as to be
 cast out for his wickedness.*

And for that other of *Mosaicall Discipline*, the Reverend Author
 confesseth, p. 11, 12. *"That all the grown members of the Church of
 "Israel were brought under such Discipline, as was established in that
 "Church by a solemn Covenant, whereof all adult persons were to take hold
 "personally. And if all the grown members of that Church were
 brought under such discipline as was then established, then the other par-
 ticular in the Antecedent, That children were under Mosaicall discipline,
 is here also confessed by the Author. Indeed, he conceiveth they were
 brought under Discipline by Covenanting personally; but that is not clear:
 but for the thing it self, That they were under Discipline, this we see is
 by him confessed; which is that which the Synod affirmed. And why
 may not that Text, Gal. 5. 3. be a sufficient proof thereof? If they
 that were circumcised, were bound to all the duties of the Law, as
 the Text affirmeth; then they were bound to that Ecclesiastical
 Discipline that the Law of Moses appointed: and therefore chil-
 dren being circumcised, were so bound, even when they were adult,
 for then they remained circumcised. There are good Expositors
 who upon that Text do teach, That Circumcision was an obligation to
 the keeping of all the Commandments of the Law in the Old Testament,
 and that Baptism is the like for all the Commandments of the Gospel:
 See Parau, and Perkins in loc. Whereby it appeareth, That what*

Discipline was under the Old Testament, children circumcised in Infancy were subject thereto, when adult, as being bound by their Circumcision to all the Commandments of the Law.

So much for Defence of the Antecedent in this Argument.

“ But, saith the Reverend Author, though the Antecedent were more manifestly true, yet the Consequent is not good; for there is not *par ratio*, the like reason of those Patriarchal and Apostolical Churches, and of Congregational Churches under the Gospel, page 11.

Ans. And yet the Reverend Author confesseth in Position the fifth and sixth, “ That the Covenant of Abraham was the same in substance under the Law, and under the Gospel: and, that the Kingdom of God, is the same in substance which is taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles; yea, and that Baptisme to come in the place of Circumcision, and therefore Infants of Confederates are now to be Baptized, as then they were to be circumcised, they being both outward seals of the same Covenant in substance. So that here seems to be a plain acknowledgment that there is *par ratio*, though in the place in hand it be denied. For, if the Covenant be for substance the same now as it was then, and that therefore Baptism may be now dispensed to Infants, as circumcision was then, those ordinances being both seals of the same covenant for substance; is not this an acknowledgment of a *par ratio* between them? and if so, what should hinder but that Children, when grown up, may as well be under Church-discipline now, as under the Old Testament? for, may they be now Baptized in their infancy, as then they were Circumcised, because there is in both *par ratio*? and might they be then under Church-discipline, and yet now not so, because here there is not *par ratio*? Is Pædobaptisme in the new Testament, rightly inferred from the Circumcision of Infants in the old Testament, because here there is *par ratio* between them? and is not their subjection to Church-discipline, when adult, in the new Testament, rightly inferred from the like subjection in the Old? It doth not appear that there is any want of *par ratio* in the one case, any more then in the other.

As for that which is here immediately brought in pag. 11. to prove that there is not *par ratio*; viz. “ Because the members of the Church, in the Patriarchs families, were to continue in Communion
“ with

with the Church all the days of their life, until they were cast out, as
 10. If *in* fact, or *voluntarily* departed from it, as Esau. We conceive
 this is no proof at all of the disparity alledged; and the reason is,
 because we say the very same concerning the Children of Church-
 members in these dayes, viz. that they still continue in the Church all
 the dayes of their life, if they be not cast out in a Gospel way,
 which he doth not disprove. And therefore in this there is no want
 of *par ratio*.

And for the proof of disparity between the Church of Israel, and
 our Churches, viz. 1. That we do not read of any Ordinance given
 10. them, for casting out Members for sins against the Moral Law.
 10. And 2. That the grown Members of that Church were brought under
 10. such discipline as was established in that Church, by a solemn Covenant,
 10. whereof all adult persons were to take hold personally.

The Answer is; Touching the former of these, that sundry things
 may be said to shew, that it is very probable that in Israel there was
 appointed of God an Ordinance of Church-censure or discipline,
 not only for sins against the Ceremoniall Law, but also against the
 Moral; For, the Lord doth so often, and earnestly command Holi-
 ness and purity to that People, and so often and severely reproveth
 the contrary, and that not only in the offenders themselves, but also in
 them that suffered it, and this not only in Ceremonial matters, but also
 in sins against the Moral Law, that it is not very probable that he
 would have no Church-discipline used for such matters as these, but
 only for Ceremonial. Is it likely, that if a man should eat *Leavened*
bread in the time of the *Passover*, that for this he must be cut off
 from the Congregation, as *Exod. 12. 15, 19.* or if a man should
 touch a dead body, or a bone of a Man, or a grave, &c. that this were
 such uncleanness, as that he must not then enter into the Tabernacle
 or Temple. but, if he did, it would be a defiling of the Sanctuary
 of the Lord, and therefore such offenders must be cut off from their People?
 and yet nevertheless, if a man had killed another man, or had commi-
 10. ned the sin of *Whoredome*, or *Drunkenness*, or other abomination, that yet
 there was no such uncleanness in these as to defile the Sanctuary, or to
 cause a man to be kept out, or cut off, or cast out for the same?
 This seems to us not very probable.

And

And yet if it were certain and clear, that so it was in those times, the purpose for which this is alledged is not gained thereby, but the Consequence questioned may be found and good for all this. The Consequence is, That if children were under *Mosaical Discipline* of old, then they are under *Congregational Discipline* now: This is the Synod's argument. But, saith the Answer, This Consequence is not good, because *Mosaical Discipline* was not so cast men out for sin against the *Moral Law*: But, say we, The Argument and Consequence may be good for all this; for, Suppose there were this difference between the *Mosaical Discipline* that was then, and the *Congregational Discipline* that is now, that the former were onely for Ceremonial uncleanness, and the latter for *Moral*; yet, if children were under the Discipline it was then, we conceive they are therefore under the Church-discipline that is now: and we think this arguing to be better, and more strong, then to say, That because they are not under such Discipline as was then, that then fore now they are under none at all. And plain it is, that the Apostle argueth for the maintenance of the Ministry now under the Gospel, from the maintenance of the Ministry that was under Moses, 1 Cor. 9. 13. and sheweth the danger of unworthy receiving our Sacraments, from the evil that befell many who were partakers of the Baptism, and the spiritual meat and drink that was then, 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2, &c. and if he argue from the Ministry and Sacraments that were under Moses; why is not the Argument also good from the *Mosaical Discipline*? We cannot think the Apostle's Consequence might be denied, because we have now no such holy things; no such Temple and Altar as was then; no such Baptism in the Cloud, and in the Sea; no such Manna, and Water out of the Rock, as they had: To deny the Consequence of the Apostle's Argument upon any such ground, we think were very insufficient; and therefore why may not the Consequence be good, from the subjection of children to *Mosaical Discipline*, to prove their subjection to *New-Testament-discipline*; although it were granted, that their Discipline were onely for Ceremonial matters, and that we have none such, but onely for sin against the moral Law? For ought we see, the Argument and Consequence is good in this case, as well as in the other.

The

The other particular alledged by the Reverend Author, to shew a difference between the Church of Israel, and our Churches, and that therefore children, when adult, might be under Mosaical Discipline, but not under Congregational., is this: "Because in that Church grown members were brought under such Discipline as was established in that Church by a solemn Covenant, whereof all adult persons were to take hold personally, p. 12.

Ans. It is not clear, nor at all said in the place alledged, viz. Deut. 26. 16, 17, 18. that by the *Entering into covenant* there mentioned, they were brought under the Church-discipline in that Church, but they might be under Church-discipline otherwise, even by the Commandment and Ordinance of God, and not merely by that Covenant, or by means of it. For, if that Covenant were entered into in the day of their bringing the Tythes of the third year, which is spoken of in the Verses immediately preceding, viz. ver. 12, 13, 14, 15. then it could not be that Covenant that brought all adult persons under Discipline: for, a man might be adult, and yet not have any Tythes to bring; as not having yet any personal estate or possession of his own, as we see it often is with us; yea, a man might be adult, and have estate and Tythes two years afore this, for this that is here spoken of was the Tythes of the third year. Now if a man were adult and had personal estate afore this time, or adult and had yet no estate, and that this Covenant was onely entered into at that third year of Tything, then it cannot be that by this Covenant they were brought under Discipline, for they were adult, and so under Discipline afore. Or if the Covenant here mentioned, were not entered into at the third year of Tything; then why might it not be of all the people jointly together, and not of any particular persons severally by themselves? there is nothing in the Text contrary to this, but rather for it, in that the Covenant here spoken of, is avouched that day to be the Lords peculiar people, ver. 18, 19. which title of [People] is not suitable to any particular person. And sure it is, that Covenant Deut 29. 10, 11, &c. was of all the people jointly together, for it was a Covenant not onely with Men, but with Women, yea with Little children, and with such as were not there that day, but with posterity that should be afterward born; and therefore this was not

only a Covenant of the adult, to bring them under Church-discipline, as if else they had not been under it, but being also with *little ones*, that were then in minority, it might suffice to bring them under Discipline when they should be grown up. So that nothing doth yet appear, to prove that *adult persons* in Israel, were not under Discipline in that Church, but by their taking hold of the Covenant personally; but for ought that doth yet appear, they might be under Discipline afore they had thus done. Therefore we yet see not any such disparity between the Patriarchall and Mosaicall Churches formerly, and the Congregationall Churches under the New Testament, but that from the subjection of children, when adult, unto Church-discipline in the former, may be justly inferred their subjection thereto in the latter.

So much for Defence of the Synods first Argument, to prove That children of Church-members, when adult, are under the Watch, Discipline, and Government of the Church.

To the second Argument, to prove Children when adult subject to Church-discipline; viz.

Because they are within the Church, or Members thereof, and therefore subject to Church-judicature, 1 Cor. 5. 12.

The Answer that is given, is, "That the Argument is to be denied, and the Text alledged doth not prove it."

Ans. The words of the Text are expresse and plain, *What have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do ye not judge them that are within? but them that are without God judgeth.* By which it is plain, and undeniable, That though those that are without be not subject to Church-judicature, or Church-discipline, yet for those that are within it is otherwise: and therefore, if these children be within, to deny them to be subject to Church-judicature, is to deny the words of the Holy Ghost.

As for that which is here said, that "By [them within] is meant Members in full communion, such as are in full membership, as well of all other Ordinances, as of Censures:

Our Answer is, That this should be Proved, as well as Affirmed, *scilicet, affirmanti incumbit probatio.* It was wont to be said, *Non est distinguendum.*

distinguendum ubi lex non distinguit: Distinctions should be warranted by the Word; therefore when the Word saith, Such as are *within* are subject to Church-judicature, to restrain this being *within*, to those that are in full communion in all Ordinances, and to exempt many others, though adult persons, and *within* the Church, onely because they are not so *within*, as to be in full communion; we say, to exempt them upon this ground from Church-judicature, is more then we see any sufficient proof for.

As for the Reason here rendred, "*That Excommunication is a casting out from communion, and therefore how can any be formally Excommunicated, who were never in communion, and so within the Church?*"

The Answer is, That the Synod doth not here expressly speak of Excommunication, and that the children are subject to that Ordinance; but onely saith, *They are under the Watch, Discipline and Government of the Church*, and therefore there was no need here to answer, *That they cannot be Excommunicated*: for, if that were so, (which we are farre from granting) yet what the Synod here saith, may be true for all this.

And though it be true, that such as were *never in Church-communion at all*, cannot properly be Excommunicated; yet the Reverend Author, we suppose, doth not, nor will deny, but that many who have *never yet been partakers of all Ordinances, or of the Lords Supper as children in minority*, yet may be counted *Church-members*, and so have much Church-communion, and enjoy much benefit thereby; as the Covenant, and Baptism the Seal thereof; the Prayers, and Blessing of the Church; Church-watchfulness, to excite them, and encourage them to, and in good, and to reclaim them from evil: Such Church-communion as this, they may be partakers of, who yet have not been admitted to full communion; and therefore what impossibility is there in it, but that men may be Excommunicated, *viz. from such communion as they had*, though they never had such full communion as others. If a Parent in full communion be justly, for some delinquency, Excommunicated, we suppose the Reverend Author * will say, *that his children in minority are cut off from their membership with him, and so are Excommunicated with the Parent*. And if

* See Essay first, pag. 13, 4 in Exam. of Prop.

so, then there may be *Excommunication*, where there never was the enjoyment of *full communion*. And so for all that is here said, [*That persons not in full communion cannot be Excommunicated*] yet what the Synod saith may be true, *That persons not in full communion may be under the Watch, and Discipline, and Government of the Church*: and how much more if even such persons may be cut off from their Church-membership, and so from what *Church-communication* they had?

To the third Argument, to prove *Children of Church-members*, when adult, to be under the *Watch, Discipline, and Government of the Church*; viz.

because they are Disciples, and therefore under Discipline in Christs School.

The Reverend Author's Answer hath in it a Concession, and an Exception: The Concession is, "That all Church-members are Disciples, Infants foederally, &c. and therefore both are under the Discipline of the Church suitably to their membership. Now if all Church-members be Disciples, and therefore under Discipline, and even Infants so in their way; it is strange, that these that their infancy are now become adult, should now be no Disciples, nor Church-members, and so not under Church-discipline, which before they were under; when as they have neither been cut off from their Membership and Discipleship, nor deserving any such matter: One would think it were more rational to say, That as they were in Church-relation when Infants, so they continue therein, though adult; except in some way of God they be cut off therefrom, and do so deserve.

But though the Reverend Author yield, as is said, yet he puts in this Exception; "That he findes not any where in Scripture, that such adult persons are styled Disciples, or accounted Members.

Ans. Suppose such Term or Title were not found applied to the Persons spoken of, yet sith for the thing it is confessed that they were Disciples and Members when Infants, is it not more rational to confess they are so still (except the Scripture said the contrary) and that they so continue (though the Term and Title be not found) untill they be upon desert cut off, or cast out; rather then to say, that now being adult, they have lost the Relation and Priviledge which

which they had when they were *Infants*, though they have not been cut off from it, nor ever so deserved before men? For, if they incur such loss by becoming adult, it may seem it were good for Members Children to dye in their *Infancy*, and never live to be adult; sith in their *Infancy* they had *Church-relations*, and *Covenant-state*, which now they have lost, though without their desert.

"The adult Disciples, in Mat. 28 20. must observe, and do all Christs Commandments, therefore the Disciples there intended, with reference to adult persons, are Members in full Communion, pag. 13.

Ans. This Arguing is but too like to that of the *Antipædobaptists*: for it is well known how they would exclude Infants by this Text, from being partakers of Baptism, because they are not Disciples so made by Teaching, or by being taught to observe all Christs Commandments; because Infants cannot do this, therefore, say they, they are not Disciples to be Baptized. But the Reverend Author confesseth, that Infants are Disciples; and, as such, are to be Baptized. Why then should he say that now, when they are become adult, they are Disciples no longer, as not observing all Christs Commandments, not being in full communion? The Arguing of the *Antipædobaptists* from this Text is to this purpose, viz. All Disciples that are to be Baptized, are taught to observe all Christs commandments; but this doth not agree to Infants: therefore Infants are not Disciples that are to be Baptized. And is not the Arguing of the Reverend Author much like it? viz. All adult persons that are Disciples, do observe all Christs Commandments: but this doth not agree to such adult persons as are not in full communion: therefore adult persons that are not in full communion are not Disciples. The Conclusion in the former arguing, the Reverend Author we are confident will not own; and therefore the Conclusion in the latter, being so like unto it, one answer may serve for both the Arguments; which is this, That the major Propositions in both do not universally and absolutely hold, but onely so far as the persons are capable; so far all Disciples that are to be Baptized, and all adult persons that are Disciples, are to observe all Christs Commandments: but as this doth not exclude Infants from being Disciples, and from being Baptized; so neither are the adult persons spoken

of excluded from being Disciples, though neither the one nor the other be yet fit for observing all Christs Commandments, in full communion, in all the Ordinances.

To the fourth Argument; *They are in Church-covenant, therefore subject to Church-power, Gen. 17. 7. & 18. 19.*

The Answer is, "That they are not in covenant de jure, being adult, and not admitted into Church-communion in all Ordinances.

Ans. And yet the Text saith, the Covenant of Abraham is with him, and his seed in their generations, Gen. 17. 7. and this Reverend Author will not deny, but that "Those that are in the covenant in their Infancy, are thereby left under engagement to service and subjection to Christ in his Church, when they shall be grown up, and that this engagement upon them is strong— To know the God of their Parents, and to serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind. p. 44. "so that if they do it not, but live in neglect or contempt of the Ordinances, or unsuitable conversation, they hereby live in the breach of that covenant, whereby they were left under engagement in their Infancy, pag 43. 44 45. Now if this be so, it plainly appeareth hereby, that as they were in the Covenant in their Infancy, they are likewise so when adult; for else, how could their sins of Omission or Commission be breach of that Covenant? can a man be guilty of breaking covenant, when he is not in it? but the sins of these adult persons are breach of covenant, therefore they are in the covenant: therefore that cannot stand which is here said, That these adult persons, that were in covenant in their Infancy, are not now in covenant when adult, until they be admitted into Church-communion in all Ordinances.

To the fifth Argument, viz. *They are Subjects of the Kingdom of Christ, and therefore under the Laws and Government of his Kingdom, Ezek. 37. 25. 26.*

The Answer is, "That this Argument may be retorted against themselves, and the proofs of it, thus: The Subjects of Christs Kingdom have full communion in all the privileges of Christs Kingdom, but these adult persons have not so, ex-communicatio, therefore they are

"not Subjects of Christs Kingdome, and so are not under the Laws and Government of it."

Ans. The sum is, The Subjects of Christs Kingdome have full communion in all the Priviledges of Christs Kingdome: But the adult persons spoken of have not such communion: *E.g.* But is this true, that *all the Subjects of Christs Kingdome have full communion in all the Priviledges of it, even in all, and not in some onely, i.e. in all Ordinances?* What shall be said then of *little children?* must they have communion in all Church-priviledges, and all Ordinances, as the Lords Supper, Voting in Elections, &c. or else be no Subjects of Christs Kingdome? It is plain, that such communion they cannot have; and yet it is as plain, that *if such is the Kingdome of God, and of Christ, and therefore he would have them to be brought unto him, and rebuked those that would have kept them from him.* Mark 10 and therefore persons may be Subjects of Christs Kingdome, and yet not have communion in all the Ordinances, or Priviledges of that Kingdome. And therefore the adult persons spoken of, may be Subjects of Christs Kingdome, though not yet fit for all Ordinances; and yet being subjects, must be subject to such Laws of that Kingdome as are suitable to their state, as *Infants and little children* to such as are suitable to theirs: Exclude these adult persons from being under the Laws and Government of Christs Kingdome, because they have not communion in all the Priviledges of it, and by the same reason we may exclude *Infants*: allow *Infants* to be Subjects of Christs Kingdome, and partakers of some Priviledges of it, viz. such as they are capable of, though not of all; and then why may not the like be yielded concerning the adult persons spoken of?

To the sixth Argument, the Answer returned, is, "*That this is the same with the third, and therefore the same Answer may serve for this also.*"

Ans. If this were so, then our Defence of the third, may be a Defence of this also: Nevertheless, it seemeth this Argument is not the same with the third, but distinct from it, the Mediums in them not being the same, but distinct: for in the one, the Argument is from their being disciples, or Scholars, and therefore under discipline in Christs.

Christ's School; but this here is from *their being Baptized*, and that therefore they are in a state of *subjection* to the authoritative teaching of Christ's Ministers, and to the observation of *all his commandments*, and that therefore they are in a state of *subjection to discipline*: for thus the Argument stands; They that are Baptized, are thereby left in a state of subjection to the authoritative teaching of Christ's Ministers, and to the observation of all his Commandments, and therefore in a state of subjection to Discipline: But the adult persons spoken of are persons Baptized: Therefore, &c. The Proposition is grounded on the Text, *Mat. 28. 19, 20.* where Christ's Ministers are required to *Baptize*, and to *teach the Baptized to observe all his commandments*. The Assumption is plain of it self.

To the seventh Argument, *viz. That Elders must feed, i. e. both Teach and Rule all the Flock; and that children are part of the Flock.*

The Reverend Author answereth, "*That this concerneth not such grown persons as are not in full communion, for without this they are not to be accounted of the Flock or Church.*"

Ans. If this that is here said were sufficiently and clearly proved, it would be very acceptable to many Elders in this Country, as clearing them from a great part of the burthen which they suppose themselves to be under. And when the Holy-Ghost saith, that *they must take heed to themselves and to all the flock*, *Act. 20. 28.* and that *they must watch for their Souls, as they that must give account*, *Heb. 13. 17.* to say, that *these Saints, and this flock*, are only such as are in full communion, and *Infants or Children in minority*; and that these last mentioned, who then were of the flock, do now cease to be of it, when they become adult; and that now the Elders are not charged to watch over them any longer, nor to give account of their Soules, we fear it is would be an undue straitning and limiting of the Texts alledged, and would be no good plea before the Lord; and therefore without better proof, we dare not assent unto it.

For what the Synod alledged, "*That the Apostle writing to the Flock or Church at Ephesus, doth also write to children*, *Eph. 6. 1.* as counting them part of the flock:

We do not see that this is sufficiently taken off, by what the Reverend Author answereth, viz. "*That those Children were either Children in their Minority, or if adult, they were personally joyned to the Church, and so in full Communion.* For, let the words and scope of the Text be considered, and we conceive it will appear, that this exposition of the place is too narrow; for the Children there spoken of, are such as were bound to obey their Parents in the Lord, this being right, and such as were under the fifth Commandment; the words whereof the Apostle doth there alledge, *Honour thy Father and Mother, &c.* Now how shall it appear, that though Children in minority, and children when admitted into full communion in the Church, are bound to obey their Parents, and to Honour Father and Mother, yet other children are not so bound? Is there any ground for it, that children now adult, if not in full communion in the Church, are exempted from this Commandment of Obedience to their Parents, and of Honouring of them? we conceive there is none: and if there be not, then the children there spoken of, are children adult as well as others, whether in full communion or not. And if so, then these children, as well as others, are part of the Flock and Church of Ephesus, to whom that Epistle is written, and then the whole Flock being under the charge of Elders to feed them (i. e. both to Teach and Rule them) it appeareth thereby, that what the Synod here saith, That these children are under the Watch, and Discipline, and Government of the Church, is sound and good, and so stands, for all that is here alledged to the contrary.

In Answer to the Eighth Argument, *From the danger of Irreligion and Apostacy breaking into Churches, and the want of any Church-way to prevent and heal the same, if these children of Church-members be not under Church-government and Discipline, and that through want hereof, many Church-members would be brought under that dreadful judgement of being let-alone in their wickedness.* Hos. 4. 16, 17.

The Reverend Author nameth sundry other means for preventing these evils; as, "*That no adult person be received into personal membership, till fit for all Church-communication; and that the Keyes of*

" the Kingdome of Heaven, which Christ hath left to binde and loose, be
 " rightly managed toward Delinquent-members that are orderly admitted
 " into Church-communion ; and for others that are not thus joynd to
 " the Church, that authority in Families and Common-wealth be wisely
 " and faithfully managed toward such, pag. 15, 16.

Ans. All these we acknowledge may, by the blessing of God, be
 much available in their way for the purpose intended : and, Oh that
 there were due care and watchfulness in Churches, Families, and
 Common-wealth, for the faithful and due exercise hereof ! Never-
 theless, we conceive all these are not sufficient for the purpose de-
 sired ;

1. Because some of them are not *Church-ways* at all, of which
 the Synods Argument speaks ; though it is not so expressed by
 the Reverend Author : and therefore though Government in Fam-
 ilies and Common-wealth were carefully used in the manner ex-
 pressed, yet *Church-way* may be wanting for all this.

2. Those *Church-ways* that are mentioned, viz. *Care in admit-
 ting into the Church, and due managing the Keyes of Discipline to them
 that are so admitted*, these are not sufficient to prevent the evils spo-
 ken of ; and the reason is, Because there is a great multitude of per-
 sons who were either born in the Church, or were admitted there-
 into in their infancy or minority, who if they be not under Church-
 discipline when adult, are *let alone in their wickedness*, in respect of
 any *Church-way* to heal them ; and by want of this Church-discipline
 toward these persons, *Irreligion and Apostacy* may break into the
 Churches, notwithstanding all *Church-ways* toward others, and
 all other ways in Common-wealth and Families toward these : for,
Church-way for the good of these there is none, if they be not under
 Church-government and Discipline.

As for that which is here said by the Reverend Author, "*That the
 Churches censuring of adult persons, admitted before they be qualified
 for communion in all Ordinances, will not prevent or heal those evils,
 seeing the Lord blesseth onely his own Institutions, not mens Devices ; and
 that Humane Inventions usually cause the evils which they pretend to
 cure*, pag. 15 ;

This Reason may have in it self a truth ; viz. that Gods Insti-
 tutions,

sutions, and not mens Inventions, are the way wherein men may expect a Blessing. But, if such a thing be affirmed of Church-discipline toward the persons spoken of, that such Church-discipline is an *Humane Invention*, why should this be affirmed and not proved? for, as for the persons spoken of, they were not first admitted when adult, but *before* they were adult, even in their infancy or minority; and now being adult, and yet never cut off, or cast out from their Church-relation, if by sin they deserve Church-censure, and yet it be not applied to them, but that, in respect thereof, they be *let alone*, are they not then under that judgement, *Hef. 4* of being *let alone in their wickedness*? And doth not this *Neglect* make way for *Irreligion and Apostasy in Churches*, no Church-way being used toward these for preventing thereof? for we do not see any ground to think, that the use of Church discipline toward such is an *Humane Invention*. For these particulars to us do seem plain:

1. That Church-discipline should be used toward all that are *within the Church*, as there may be occasion and need of it, and as in respect of understanding and age they are capable.

2. It is plain also, that the persons spoken of were once *within the Church*, and, as such, were baptized in their infancy; this cannot be denied, but by joyning with the *Anapædobaptists*, in denying the *Baptism and Church-membership of little children*.

And lastly, it is plain also, that the persons spoken of, though now they be adult, were never yet, in any way of God, *cast out, or cut off from the Church*, and the relation to it which they formerly had; and many of them are far from *deserving* any such matter. Now though Church-government and Church-discipline toward such as were never in the Church, might be counted an *Humane Device*, yet for such as were once according to Order and Divine Institution *within it*, as Members thereof, and never were since *set out of it, or cut off from that relation* (which is the case of the persons spoken of) to say, That Church-government and Church-discipline toward such, is an *Humane Invention*, we see no sufficient Reason either to say or think; but do rather conceive, that this Church-discipline is so far from being an *Humane Invention*, that the *neglect thereof*, is a neglect of a *Divine Institution*; and that *asjoyning*

of *best persons*, and declaring of them to be *Non-members*, (which some speak for) if this be not a Church-censure, what is it other then an *Humane invention and Device*?

So much for *Defence* of what is said by the Synod in their third Proposition, to prove, *That the children of Church-members, when grown up, are under the Watch, Discipline, and Government of the Church.*

Propos. 4. The fourth Proposition of the Synod, is, *That these adult Persons are not therefore to be admitted to full communion, merely because they are and continue Members, without such further qualifications as the word of God requireth thereunto.*

By which Proposition of the Synod, there is a preventing of an usual objection from the danger of polluting the Ordinances by unworthy partakers, if the children of Church-members be counted members, and to be (as such) under Church-watchfulness and government when adult; for some may think, that if this their relation to the Church be granted, there will then be danger that they will also come to the Lords Supper afore they be duely qualified for that Ordinance: now the scope of this fourth Proposition is to prevent this evil; and therefore it is the more to be admired, that the Proposition should not be granted by the Reverend Author, and by all that desire the Lords Supper may be preserved from unworthy partakers, as we do not doubt but he doth. But why then is this Proposition stuck at? if it may not be granted, that these adult persons are not to be admitted to full communion without such qualifications as the word of God requireth thereunto, which is what the Synod saith; must the contrary to this be granted; that they may be admitted thereunto without such qualifications at all? we suppose the Reverend Author would not grant this: and yet he doth not consent to the other, but excepts against the proofs of it.

For, saith he, "*Though this Proposition seems to them plain, yet it seems not sufficiently cleared by their Proofs: 1. From 1 Cor. II. 28, 29.* where it is required, that such as come to the Lords Supper, be able to examine themselves, and discern the Lords body, else they will eat and drink unworthily, and eat and drink judgement to themselves, when

when they partake of this Ordinance: *But this ability is too often
 " seen to be wanting in the children of the covenant that grow up to years,*
" pag. 16, 17.

To this Argument the reply of the Reverend Author is by way of
 Concession, and of Exception.

His Concessions are two: " 1. *That the want of such abilities
 " in the children of the covenant, is indeed too often seen, through the too
 " frequent neglect of Parents in their Education, and of Ministers and
 " Churches in their Instruction, (or Instruction) and Catechizing, and
 " watching over them, pag. 17.*

Ans. It seems then that the children of Church-members,
 even when they are grown up to years (for it is of such that the
 Synods Argument here speaketh, and so the Reverend Author doth
 express it) are not only under the Education of Parents, but also under
 the Instruction, Catechizing and watch of the Ministry, and of the Church;
 how then will that stand which was said before, pag. 10. " *That
 " when they are grown up, they are not under the watch, discipline and
 " government of the Church?* for here it is granted, that they are un-
 der the watch of the Church (and if under Church-watch properly
 as such, then under Discipline) and that the neglect of Ministers
 and Churches herein, is one cause of their want of ability to examine
 themselves, and to discern the Lords body. Now can the neglect of
 Church-watchfulness be a cause of this evil, if the Lord have not
 appointed them to be under the same? these things seem not well to
 agree: Again, if the want of such abilities be too often seen in the
 children of the covenant when grown up, as is here acknowledged;
 then what the Synod here saith seems to be true, and stand good,
 that such grown persons, though children of the covenant, or Church-
 members, are not therefore to be admitted to full communion: the
 reason is, because notwithstanding this, they may want that ability,
 that is requisite to such full communion.

2. The second Concession here is, " *That Membership is separable
 " from, yea destitute of, such ability in the Infant-seed or children of the
 " covenant, in their minority, and therefore they are not to be admitted to
 " the Lords Supper, and that Text (viz. 1 Cor. 11. 28, 29.)
 " proves it.*

Ans. Doth that Text prove that Infants, and children in minority, though members of the Church, are not yet to be admitted to the Lords Supper, because they are not able to examine themselves and to discern the Lords body; and doth it not also prove the same concerning children when adult, if this disability be found in them also? Sure Infants and Children in minority, are not expressly mentioned in the Text, no more then Children when adult or grown up; and if the Logicians rule be good which saith *à quatenus ad omne valet consequentia*, then if infants and children in minority must not be admitted to full communion, because of their want of the ability spoken of; it will follow, if the like inability be found in the adult, that these also must not be admitted, and that for the like Reason. And if that Text 1 Cor. 11. be sufficient to prove the one, it is sufficient for proof of the other also; and so this Argument of the Synod stands good.

The Exception he added, is, "That yet it may not be granted, that when they are grown up to years, they are, and continue Members regularly, being through want of that ability not fit for Church-communion, (i. e. for full communion.)"

Ans. If it may not be granted that they continue Members, why should not something be produced to prove the contrary? Why should such a thing be barely affirmed, and not proved? It is true they were once Members, and, as such, were Baptized; and it is clear, that though now they be adult, or grown up, yet they were never, in any way of God, cut off, or cast out from their Membership: and therefore we think it more rational to say, that they still continue to be Members, then to say that they do not; and this without alledging any proof at all.

As for that which here followeth, "That if persons being unbaptized should desire to have the Covenant and their Church-membership sealed by Baptism, they must hold forth faith in Christ wrought in their hearts, before they may be baptized, as Philip required the Eunuch, Acts 8. So, by parity of Reason, if one baptized in infancy, & being grown up to years, desires to be joynt to the Church, he must hold forth his personall faith in the Son of God, &c."

The Answer is, That there is not, as is said, parity of Reason be-
tween

between the cases alledged, but great disparity: for, in the one case the persons spoken of are *unbaptized*; in the other, *baptized* already: in the one case, the persons *desire to have the Covenant and their Church-membership sealed by Baptism*; and in the other case there is no such desire, the persons having had the Covenant, and their Membership sealed by Baptism already, even in their infancy or minority long since: in the one case, the persons seem as yet to be *Non-members*, though they do *claim that Priviledge*; but in the other case, the persons were *Church-members long ago*. For, as for that term that is used concerning these of *desiring to be joynd to the Church by their own personall right*; we conceive this word of [*joyning*] to the Church if it be meant of their *first joyning* thereto, is very improper, because *these persons* are not now to be *sojoynd*, but were *joynd to the Church long since*: Nor is the Church now to admit them to *Church-membership*, for they were admitted thereto long since.

The second Argument of the Synod for proof of this fourth Proposition, is *From the Old Testament, wherethrough men did continue Members of the Church, yet for ceremoniall uncleanness they were to be kept from full communion in the holy things; yea, and the Priests and Porters had speciall charge that men should not partake in all the holy things, unless duely qualified for the same, notwithstanding their Membership, &c.*

To this the Reverend Author Answereth, " 1. That the invalidity
" of *Proofes from the Old Testament, being applyed to Gospel-Ordinances,*
" and so this of *Baptism under the New Testament, in things whereof*
" there is not the like reason, hath been declared in the fourth, sixth, and
" eighth Positions, with which this proof doth not agree.

Ans. To this we Answer, 1. That there is validity, and much weight in proofs from the Old Testament, for confirming and clearing things under the New: for even those Scriptures were written for our learning, Rom. 15. 4. and Christ himself bids us *search them*, as those which did *Testifie of Him*, Job. 5. 39. and brings many Proofs out of those Scriptures for confirming and clearing things under the Gospel, Luk. 24. 44, 45, 46. & 16. 29, 31. and so do the Apostles likewise, even in main & fundamental matters, *Act. 17. 2, 3.*

28. 23. and so from the *maintenance of the Ministry* that was under the Old Testament, to the maintenance of the Ministry now, 1 Cor. 9. 13. from *their Sacraments to ours*; and from the *danger of unworthy receiving those*, to the danger of unworthy receiving *ours*, 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. &c. By which, and much more that might be added, it is plain, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament have much validity in them, for confirming and clearing Truths in New Testament-times.

2. The Reverend Author doth acknowledge, as was noted before, "That the covenant of Abraham is the same for substance, now under the Gospel, as it was under the Law; and that the Kingdom of God is the same to the Jews formerly, and to the Gentiles now; and that Baptism of Infants, under the New Testament, may be rightly proved from the Circumcision of Infants under the Old. Which passages do sufficiently witness, that in his judgement there is validity in Proofs from the Old Testament, for things under the New.

3. It is a great weakness and mistake in sundry of the *Antipædobaptists*, that they would limit the Proofs for Infant-Baptism, and for the Covenant-interest of children, unto the Scriptures of the New Testament, as if the Covenant of Abraham, and the Circumcision of Infants in the Old Testament, were of no validity for the purpose mentioned. And it is not comfortable that the Reverend Author should so often harp upon this string, and so often mention this matter of the *invalidity of Old Testament-Scriptures for proof of matters in Gospel times*; as if he did concur with them, in their Tenet against *Infant-baptism*, which he frequently professeth against, albeit in this, his language seems but too like theirs, which we could wish were otherwise.

4. For that expression of [*Things whereof there is not the like reason*] being a limitation, or explanation of the *invalidity* spoken of, let this be applied to the case in question, and we conceive it will not weaken the *Argument in hand*, nor shew any *Invalidity therein*, but rather the contrary; for if Ceremonial uncleanness did hinder men from full communion in the Ordinances in the Old Testament, notwithstanding their Membership; is there not the like reason, or rather much more, that Membership alone should not suffice for full

full communion in these dayes, if Moral fitness and Spiritual qualifications be wanting? It seems in this case there is the like reason, or rather much more: and therefore the Synods Argument in the present case, and their proof from the Old Testament, cannot be laid aside, or refused, for any *invalidity* therein, through want of the like Reason

2. The Reverend Author saith, "*If the Texts alledged by the Synod were applicable to Church-members in Gospel-times, yet they suit not the case in question. And why not? the reason rendred, is, "Because all men that were members of the Jewish Church, had full communion in all Legal Ordinances, even they that were ceremonially unclean had so before their uncleanness, and after they were healed of their uncleanness, as well as others. So then the unsuitableness is, that ceremonially uncleanes, did debar men from full communion, though they had been partakers of it afore, and might be again after their cleansing: whereas the case in question is of such as yet never had such full communion. But what weight is there in this, to weaken the Synods Argument? If ceremonially uncleanes did then hinder men from full communion, who had formerly had it is there not as much reason that want of spirituall qualifications should now hinder men from such full communion, who yet have never had it? one would think such a matter as would suffice for the debarring of one from full communion, who had formerly enjoyed it, might suffice for hindring one from such communion who never yet was partaker thereof. And if the Priests and Porters in Israel had charge, that men should not partake of all the holy things, unless duly qualified for the same, notwithstanding their membership in full communion with the Church (for so the Reverend Author, 1. 19. understands that place in 2 Chron. 23 19.) doth it not much more follow, that such as yet never had such full communion may justly be kept therefrom, untill duly qualified, notwithstanding their Membership? For ought we see, this Consequence is strong and undeniable, and so the Synods Argument in this place from the Old Testament is not at all overthrown, but rather more strengthened.*"

As for what the Reverend Author saith, pag. 18, 9. to the particular Texts here alledged, viz. Levit. 7. 20, 21. Numb. 6. 6, 7. & 19. 13, 20. Ezek. 44. 7, 8, 9. which he understandeth to signifie and

teach, "That in Gospel-times men should be removed out of Church-
 "communion by Excommunication, if they were scandalous and impeni-
 "tent sinners; and that such scandalous persons, such as were visibly un-
 "circumcised in heart, and spiritually unclean, should not be admitted into
 "the Church: We shall not insist upon these particulars, for it is
 our desire that no unworthy persons may be admitted into the
 Church, nor suffered to continue therein.

Onely before we leave this second Argument, it may be observed,
 That whereas the Synod had said, *More was required to adult persons*
eating the Passover, then meer membership; therefore so there is
 now to the Lords Supper.

The Reverend Author answereth, "It is true, more then that mem-
 "bership which they had in infancy or minority, was required in adult
 "persons to eat the Passover: For first, when they became adult, they
 "were to covenant solemnly with the Lord and his People in their own
 "persons, whereunto Heart-fitness was necessary, that their persons and
 "services might be accepted of God— Secondly, This Heart-fitness was
 "also to be exercised when they were to eat the Passover, p. 19, 20.

Wherein there is a consent to what the Synod had said, about
 more then membership to be requisite to the eating of the Passover.
 And if this ground of the Synod be true and good, is not their in-
 ference from it good also, viz. *That more then membership is also re-*
quisite to the receiving of the Lords Supper?

The third Argument of the Synod for confirming this fourth
 Proposition, is taken From the different nature of Baptism and
 the Lords Supper; the former firstly and properly sealing Cove-
 nant-holiness, Church-membership, and planting into Christ, and
 so Members as such are the subjects of that Ordinance: But the
 Lords Supper is a Sacrament of growth in Christ, and of speciall
 communion with him, and so supposeth a speciall renewing of Faith
 and Repentance in them that partake of that Ordinance.

The Reverend Author making answer to this, saith nothing at all
 touching the different nature of these two Ordinances, on which this
 Argument of the Synod is built; and so Baptism may be for all
 Church-members as such, and the Lords Supper not for all, but onely

for some, for any thing that the Reverend Author saith to the contrary. For, as for the *different nature* of these two Ordinances, he saith nothing thereto at all : But his Answer is about the *communion* that is inferred from Church-membership, viz. "*That the membership of children in minority infers church-communion, so far as they are capable— and so they are to be baptized; but the Church-membership of adult persons infers communion in all Ordinances, and particularly in the Lords Supper.*"

Which Answer, as it medleth not with the *different nature* of *Baptism*, and the *Lords Supper*, from which the Synod argueth ; so it is an Answer which being considered in it self, is nothing but a *petitio principii*, or a begging of the question, affirming that which is the thing to be proved : For, the Synods Proposition is, *that these adult persons are not therefore to be admitted to full communion, merely because they are and continue Members—* and they give three Arguments for this. Now the Reverend Author in Answer to the third of those Arguments, saith, as here we see, *that the Membership of adult persons, infers communion in all Ordinances, the Lords Supper, &c.* The Synod saith in effect, This Membership alone doth not infer full communion ; and the Answer here given, is an affirming of the contrary, viz. *that it doth infer it ;* which Answer cannot goe for a sufficient overthrow of the Synods Proposition, unless we shall say, that a *meer affirming of the contrary*, is sufficient for that purpose. But if a contrary affirmation, be a sufficient confutation, it were easy in that way to confute the things that are most strongly proved.

For a conclusion of this fourth Proposition, and the Arguments for it, the Synod doth infer, *That if Persons when adult may be, and continue Members, and yet be debarred from the Lords Supper, until meet qualifications for the same be found in them, then may they also (until like qualifications) be debarred from that power of voting in the Church, which pertaines to males in full communion :—for how can they who are not able to examine and judge themselves, be thought able and fit to discern and judge in the weighty affairs of the House of God?*

Now what saith the Reverend Author to this ? one thing he saith, is this, "*That Church-membership in adult Persons, infers communion*"

"in all Ordinances, in the Lords Supper, and in Voting, and in Censures, Which is nothing but an affirmation of the contrary to the Synods Proposition, which they had confirmed by Arguments, and of their Inference therefrom: but until their Arguments be taken away, their Proposition, and their Inference from it, stands good: and therefore this affirmation of the contrary may not be admitted.

Another thing the Reverend Author here saith, is this, "That no adult person may be received into meer Membership regularly, until he be qualified fully for other Ordinances, and for Voting, and judging in Church-affairs.

Where, if by receiving such into Membership be meant, that they were not members before now, when they are adult, but are now first received into that estate; Then the Answer is, That the adult persons spoken of are not now first received into Membership, but have been in that estate long since, even from their Infancy or minority, and therefore they cannot properly be said to be Now received into Membership: but if hereby be meant, That they cannot regularly be acknowledged to be Members, until they be fully qualified for all Ordinances, for Voting, and for judging in Censures, then this is but the same which we had before, even an affirmation contrary to what the Synod had said. But till the Synods Proposition, with their Arguments for it, and their Inference from it, be removed, the Reader may judge what is to be thought of a meer affirmation to the contrary.

So much for Defence of the Synods fourth Proposition.

Propos. 5. For the fifth Proposition, viz, Church-members who were admitted in minority, understanding the Doctrine of Faith, and publicly professing their assent thereto; not scandalous in life, and solemnly owning the Covenant before the Church, wherein they give up themselves and their children to the Lord, and subject themselves to the Government of Christ in the Church, their children are to be Baptized.

The first Argument of the Synod for confirming this Proposition, is; Because the children here spoken of, are partakers of that which is the main ground of baptizing any children whatsoever, and neither

doth not at all enervate what the Synod here saith. For, suppose men must be duely qualified before they be admitted to Covenant and Membership, doth this prove, that *interest in the Covenant* is not the ground of *Title* to the Seal? it seems not to prove it at all; and the reason is, Because this speaks not to the thing in question, but to another point. For, whether *interest* in the Covenant do prove right to the Seal, is one thing; and how men should be qualified *before* they be admitted to Covenant, is another; and the *former* being that which is here affirmed by the Synod, it cannot be overthrown by what the Reverend Author affirmeth concerning the *latter*, except we shall say, that a thing may be sufficiently confuted by speaking to another point, when one doth not speak *ad idem*. Whether the Parents of the children here spoken of, be *duely qualified* for Covenant, and unto Membership, is not the thing here in question, nor spoken of by the Synod; but here is the thing they affirm, that *Interest in the Covenant gives Title to Baptism*— Besides, suppose the qualifications here mentioned by the Reverend Author, of being “*Saints, Sanctified, and Faithfull in Christ Jesus*, and the rest, suppose these be requisite in men that are to be admitted to Covenant and Membership, yet this concerns not the Parents of the children here spoken of, because they are not *now* to be admitted into the Covenant and Church membership, but are therein *already*, and have been long afore now, even from their minority or birth; and therefore this also is another Reason, why that which is here spoken by the Reverend Author is beside the question.

Further, whereas the Synod here addeth, *That a Member, or one in Covenant as such, is the Subject of Baptism*, was further cleared in Propos. 1.

The Reverend Author answereth, “*That the light which that Proposition holdeth forth for clearing this, is in one clause, which is here omitted, viz. [According to Scripture] They that according to Scripture are Members of the visible Church, are the Subjects of Baptism.*”

Ans. Then let that clause be here added, which was there expressed by the Synod in that first Proposition: if then the Reverend Author do consent thereto, as it may seem by his manner

manner of alledging it, that he doth; then what the Synod here affirmeth, is gained, viz. *That Interest in the Covenant is the ground of Title to Baptism*: and indeed the Synod gave five Arguments for clearing of that first Proposition, which the Reverend Author doth not there meddle withall, much less remove; and therefore they still stand in force.

Only it may be observed, that whereas here he seems to consent to the Proposition, if that term [*according to Scripture*] be added, yet when he spake to that first Proposition, he consented not thereto, unless this term [*according to Scripture*] might be changed into this [*according to Christs Ordinance*] otherwise he could not then concur with that Proposition, and this term in it, though now it seems he doth: But whether it be expressed the one way or the other, with the term of [*Members [according to Scripture]*] or [*according to Christs Ordinance,*] if it be granted that such Members are the subjects of Baptisme, then the Doctrine of the Synod in this point is granted. As for what is here said to that Proposition, if this term [*according to Scripture*] be not omitted, but taken in, viz. "*That according to Scripture, the Covenant was differently administered in different times of the Church*; which different manner of administration is here, pag. 22. and in the tenth Position, which is here cited, said to be this in sum, "*That the Church was once in Families, or domestical; under Moses, National; and under Christ, Congregational.*"

Ans. VVhat if all this were granted? Is there any thing in this (for we would willingly keep to the Question) to overthrow the Synods first Proposition, or their saying that is here under debate, viz. *That Interest in the Covenant is the main ground of title to Baptism*? It seems nothing at all. For, if according to Scripture there have been different administrations of the Covenant in different times, and that the Church was heretofore *Domestical*, afterward *National*, and now *Congregational*; all this may be granted, and yet it may be a Truth that is here said, *That Interest in the Covenant is the main ground of Title to Baptism.*

That these Children are in Covenant, the Synod saith, appears;

1. *Because if the Parent be in Covenant, the Child is so also: but the Parents in question are in Covenant.*

To this the Reverend Author Answereth, "*That if this being in Covenant, be understood of being in it according to Gospel-rules, and that the Childrens being in Covenant, be understood of Infant Children, or Children in minority, then the Proposition is true, or else it must be denied.*"

Ans. Concerning the one of these Particulars, viz. of being in Covenant according to Gospel-rules, it may be granted that it is so, to be understood, and that it is not to be imagined, that the Synod meant it any otherwise. But for the other particular, *that the Children in Covenant are only Infants or Children in minority*, this is a limitation that needs further consideration, and will be spoken to afterward.

Whereas the Synod, to prove the Parents in question to be in Covenant, alledgeth, "*That they were once in Covenant, and never since discovenanted; the former, because else they had not warrantably been Baptized; and the latter, because they have not in any way of God been discovenanted, cast out, or cut off from their Covenant-relation.*"

The Reverend Author in his Answer hereunto, saith, "*That they are discovenanted, by not performing that whereunto they were engaged by the Covenant, — for which he alledgeth Rom. 2. 25.*"

Ans. 1. It seems then the Covenant doth not only reach unto Children during their minority, but also when they are become adult; for else how could they when adult, be faulty in not performing that whereunto the Covenant engageth? can men be faulty for not performing Covenant-engagements, when they are not comprehended in the Covenant? this seems not possible: therefore here seems to be a concession that the Covenant reacheth further then to Infancy or minority, and that they who were in Covenant in their Infancy by means of their Parents covenanting for them, are also in that Covenant when they are become adult.

2. Nor is it clear, that mens not performing what the Covenant requireth of them, doth forthwith *discovenant* them, if by being discovenanted, be meant their not being in that Church-relation in which they were before, for God is wont to be patient, and long-suffering toward them that are in Covenant with him, and to beat with them

them long afore he give them a bill of Divorce, as it is said in *Nehem.* 9. 30. *Many years didst thou forbear them;* and therefore it may seem more rigour then the Word alloweth, to think or say, that *such as were in covenant with God in their infancy or minority, are forthwith fallen out of that estate, if they do not, as soon as ever they become adult, perform what that Covenant requireth.* The long-suffering of God will not allow us so to judge, unless we had more clear warrant for such judgement: Nor doth the Text alledged, viz. *Rom. 2. 25.* prove any such thing; but when it is there said, *Thy circumcision is made uncircumcision,* the meaning is. it shall not profit thee at all in such a state, as to eternal benefit: and so Baptism may be said in such case to be *no Baptism*; and Covenant, and Church-relation, to be *no Covenant, no Church-relation*, i. e. not to yield any such profit in that estate: But yet if such should afterward be brought to Repentance and New-obedience, would any say, that now such persons must be circumcised again, or baptized again, as if the former, in respect of the external act, were become null? We suppose this could not be said justly, though in respect of any profit to their Souls, their Circumcision and Baptism in their former estate was *as none*: and so we may say their Covenant and Church relation is *as none*, in respect of any Spiritual saving benefit to their Souls; if they perform not what the Covenant bindes them unto; and yet it can no more be said, that in respect of their Church-relation, and external visible state, they are not in the Church, or not in the Covenant, then in the other particulars it can be said, that they are not circumcised, or not baptized. It is one thing to be *in the Covenant, and in the Church*, in respect of external state, and another thing to *enjoy* all the spiritual and eternal benefits of such a relation; and though this latter be the portion of none but such as come to be truly regenerate, yet the other is, and so continues, the right of all that have once had it, untill in *some way of God* they be cut off from it, and so deprived thereof.

The Synod having said, *That persons once in Covenant are not broken off from it, according to Scripture, save for notorious sins, and incorrigibleness therein, which is not the case of these Parents.*

The Reverend Author answereth, *“That if they break off themselves,*

"*selves, by breaking the Covenant which was sealed by Baptism in their infancy or minority, they thereby deprive themselves of the benefits and Privileges of the Covenant, and in such case are to be looked at like those in 1 Joh. 2. 19.*

Ans. If by *breaking off themselves*, were meant no more, but that they do this *meritoriously*, i. e. that by their sin they deserve to be broken off, then it may be granted, that in this sense persons may (though not that *these* do) *break off themselves from their Covenant-relation*; and so also may persons that have been in full communion, even *these* by their sins may thus *break off themselves*, in which sense it is said, *Hos. 13. 9. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self*, i. e. that their sins were the procuring or meritorious cause of their destruction. But if hereby be meant, that the persons spoken of do *break off themselves from their Church-relation* not onely meritoriously, but actually and really, then it may be justly questioned, whether Church-members can thus *break off themselves*. Sure Israel did not thus destroy themselves, because all judgement and punishment is from the Lord, whose work it is to *kill, and make alive, to wound, and to heal, to create peace and evil*; so that there is no evil in the city, but the Lord doth it, *even the Lord doth all these things*, Deut. 32. 39. Isa. 45. 7. Amos 3. 6. And therefore, if *breaking off from Church-estate*, be an evil of Punishment, men cannot in this sense *break off themselves* without God. Besides, men cannot of themselves alone bring in themselves into the Church, but there is requisite the Consent of the Church thereto; and therefore if they cannot, of themselves alone, bring in themselves into the Church, how is it credible that of themselves alone they should *break themselves off from the Church*? One would think, that such as cannot of themselves alone open the door for their Entrance into the Church, should no more be able to open it for their going out. And further, it seems not rational, that Delinquents in the Church should have it in their power, whether they will be censured with Church-censure, or no; and yet it must be so, if men that have been Church-members may *un-Member themselves* at their pleasure: for sure it is, Church censures cannot be dispensed to any, but to such as are within the Church, 1 Cor. 5. 12. If therefore a Church-member, suppose one that hath been

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in full communion, shall commit the most enormous and scandalous wickedness that can be named; yet if men may break off themselves from Church-relation at their pleasure, such an one may have it in his choice whether he will be censured, or no: for, if he can but say, *I am no Member of your Church, nor will be, but do forsake the Church-relation in which I was*, it shall then be in the power of such a notorious Delinquent to bind the Churches hands from censuring him; and so make the Rule of Christ to be of none effect, which saith, *Deliver such a man to Satan*, 1 Cor. 5. which makes it very improbable, that men can of themselves break off themselves from the Covenant and Church-relation. As for them in 1 Job. 2. 19. of whom it is said, *They went out from us, but they were not of us*, &c. why may not this going out be understood of a local departure, or of a departing from the company, and communion of the Saints, and such Duties and acts of Love as that Church-relation requireth, rather then of a going out from the relation it self? It is plain, men may of themselves (if they have no more grace) neglect the duties which their nearest relations require, and depart from them in respect of place and duties; as David and Job were thus forsaken by their kindred, brethren, and mothers children, &c. Psal. 38. 11. & 69. 8. Job 19. 13, 14. but doth this prove, that those brethren and mothers children, who thus neglected the duties which their relation required, were now no longer in the relation at all? were these brethren and mothers children, now become mothers children no longer, nor brethren any longer, because now they were gone from the duties which they should have performed? This doth not follow at all: How then doth it follow, that those who went out from the Saints in respect of place and performance of duties, were thereby gone out from their Church-relation? they might by this departure of theirs deserve to be cut off by Church-censure from their Church-estate; but that by this their departing they did cut off, or break off themselves from their Church-estate, any otherwise then meritoriously, doth not appear.

The Synod having said, *That the Parents in Question are in Covenant, because the Tenor of the Covenant is to the Faithful and their seed after them in their Generations*, Gen. 17. 7.

The Reverend Author in his Answer hereto, pag. 24. saith,
 " That the sealing of this covenant to the posterity of Isaac and Jacob
 " by circumcision, was to continue throughout their Generations, till the
 " coming of Christ; and that the Covenant is for the substance the same
 " to us as it was to them, it being established by the Blood of Christ, Luk.
 " 1. 69, 72. 73. Heb. 13. 20.

Ans. Here is then a consent to the Synods Argument, and the
 Proof of it: for, if the Covenant be for substance the same to us
 as it was to them, and was then to the Faithful and their seed in their
 Generations; doth it not then follow, that these Parents being
 the Seed of the Faithful, are hereby proved to be in the covenant?
 this seems a plain granting of the Synods saying, and of their
 Proof of it.

Whereas the Synod said, That the Parents in Question are keepers
 of the Covenant, because they are not forsakers, and rejecters of the
 God, and Covenant of their Fathers; and alledged for this
 Deut. 29. 25, 26. 2 King. 17. 15—20. 2 Chron.
 7. 22. Deut. 7. 10.

The Reverend Author Answereth, " That keepers of the covenant,
 " the Parents in Question are not; for though they are not such forsakers,
 " and rejecters of it, as they who are spoken of in the Texts alledged; yet
 " besides that gross Idolatry, there is a spiritual Idolatry in scandalous
 " covetousness, Col. 3. 5. Worldly-mindedness, whereby men forsake
 " and reject God and his Covenant to serve the World—and such may
 " they be who answer all the terms of their fifth Proposition, externally
 " and visibly.

Ans. Now herein is a marvellous thing, and not easie to be un-
 derstood; for the Proposition saith expressly, that the persons spoken
 of are not scandalous in life; and the Answer is, That men may An-
 swer that, and all the other terms of the Proposition externally, and
 visibly, and yet be guilty of Scandalous covetousness; and Worldly-
 mindedness. Now that men may be not Scandalous in life, and yet
 guilty of Scandalous covetousness; guilty of Scandalous covetousness
 and worldly-mindedness, and yet not Scandalous in life; these things
 seem contradictory and inconsistent, *Cipiat qui capere potest*. It
 seems to us more rational to think and say, That though it be
 possible

possible for men to be not *Scandalous in life*, and yet to be guilty of *Worldly-mindedness*, and other secret sins, and *heart-wickedness*; yet if they answer this and *all the terms of the Proposition*, it seems not improbable but they may be truly godly, and sincere, sith they are not only not *Scandalous in life*, but do give up themselves and their children to the Lord, and subject themselves to the Government of Christ in his Church; and all this not *Ignorantly*, but with understanding; not *slightly*, but *Solemnly and Publickly before the Church*: for, doth not all this make their sincerity hopeful? we conceive it may. But that they should do all this, and in such manner as is said, and yet for all this to be so far from probability of grace, as to be *Forsakers and Rejecters of God and his covenant*, to serve the *World*, and this not onely secretly, and in heart, but so outwardly, and visibly, as to be scandalous therein; how this can be, we must confess we do not understand.

To that of the Synod, where they say, *That the Parents in question do not put in any barre to hinder their children from Baptism*: and that this is plain from the words of the Proposition, where they are described to be such as understand the Doctrine of Faith, &c.

The Reverend Author in his Answer, saith, "*That notwithstanding this, the Parents may put in a barre to hinder their children from Baptism, because a man may do and be all that is required in that Proposition, and yet have no faith in Christ, but be an unregenerate person*—

Ans. It is one thing what a man may do, and yet be an *unregenerate person* really and in the sight of God, who knoweth the heart; and another thing to be *visibly so* in the view of men, and in their rational judgement: for it is granted, that a man may be and do outwardly and visibly all that the Proposition mentioneth, yea and all that can be named further, and yet be really, and in the sight of God, an *unregenerate person*; but yet this needs not to hinder his childe from Baptism before the Church: for such was the case of *Judas, Ananias and Sapphira, Simon Magus*, and others, who had a name to live, and yet were dead, Rev. 3. 1. and yet for all this deadness and unregeneracy of theirs, the Church did warrantably admit

them and theirs to Baptism, because visibly, and for ought that the Church could discern, they were regenerate, sith *De occultis non judicat Ecclesia*. But that a man may do, and be all that the Proposition mentioneth, and yet be *unregenerate*, and without Faith, not onely in the sight of God, but also visibly, and to the Churches judgement; this seems not very probable. Even one of the particulars which the Proposition mentioneth, viz. that of [*Giving up themselves to the Lord*] is spoken of by the Apostle, as a token of the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia, 2 Cor. 8. 1, 5. And when the Synod mentioneth not onely this particular, but five or six others in the Proposition, must we for all this say, That men may do *this*, and all that is mentioned in that Proposition, and yet have no grace of God bestowed on them, but be, even *quoad nos*, without all faith in Christ, and in an unregenerate estate, and so put in a barre to hinder the Baptism of their children? we cannot but fear such judgement is more rigorous then Charity will allow; for the Scripture tells us, that *the tree is known by its fruit*, Mat. 12. & 7. and, that even *a child is known by his doings*, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right, Prov. 20. 11. and therefore when there are so many things for the Parents in question, as are mentioned in the Proposition, and nothing appearing to the contrary, we think such Parents, having been Members of the Church in their minority, may justly be looked at as those who do not put in any barre to hinder their children from Baptism.

The Reverend Author further saith, pag. 25. "*Though these Parents are not Scandalous in life, but Solemnly own the covenant before the Church, wherein they give up themselves and their children to the Lord, and subject themselves to the Government of Christ in the Church, yet all these may be affirmed of many who have a form of Godliness, and deny the power thereof: from such Paul warned Timothy to Turn away*, 2 Tim. 3. 5.

Ans. But is it credible, that those in 2 Tim. 3. could answer all that is said in this Proposition? were they not *Scandalous in life*, but did give up themselves to the Lord, and subject themselves to the Government of Christ in his Church? what then means the many Scandalous sins mentioned ver. 2, 3, 4. and what was this *denying the Power of Godliness*

Godliness that is charged upon them? it is most like it was such a denying as that in *Tit. 1. 16.* where they are said to profess to know God, but by works to deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate; and if so, then they were far from answering what is said of these Parents: for, these Parents are not Scandalous in life; but those the Apostle speaks of are Scandalous, and abominable for wickedness: these Parents are commendable for sundry good things in them, and good duties done by them; whereas those the Apostle speaks of are not so, but disobedient, and to every good work reprobate. And when the Apostle bids *Timothy, turn away from such*; doth not this imply that they were Scandalous persons, and apparently wicked? it is not likely that the Apostle would else have commanded to turn from them, since he himself did so lovingly converse with so many sorts of men, that he might gain them to the Lord, *1 Cor. 9. 19, 20, &c.* and gives Commandment to receive the weak, *Rom. 14. 1.* and to instruct with meekness such as oppose themselves, if God peradventure may give them Repentance, &c. *2 Tim. 2. 25.* which things do strongly argue, that those whom he Commands in *2 Tim. 3.* to turn away from, were not such as are described in the Proposition, but far worse, being apparently and grossly wicked. For otherwise, how could the Apostle in commanding to Turn away from them, be cleared from direct contradicting both his own Doctrine and his own Practice? But let those in *2 Tim. 3.* whom he commands to Turn away from, be understood of persons grossly vicious and Scandalous, and then the appearance of contradiction is easily cleared, and so the Parents in question cleared from being such persons, as must be Turned away from.

So much for Defence of the first Argument.

But before the Reverend Author proceed to the next, he is something large in suggesting, that the Elders do admit persons into Membership, who are not qualified according to what is said in this Proposition, so that if their Doctrine in this matter were right, yet it is here *pag. 25, 25.* frequently intimated that their Practice is otherwise. "For, saith he, they cannot prove that all adult persons whom they admit into personal and immediate Membership, are such as the Proposition describeth: For, I demand, do they all understand the Doctrine of

" of Faith? what course do they take to know it? Are all the adult persons, whom they admit into Membership, such as the Proposition describes? do they take a right course to know they are such? that they are not Scandalous in life, &c.

Ans. The Proposition speaks of such as were admitted in minority, and therefore what is done towards these when they are adult, is not fitly called admitting into Membership. For, as Mr. Cotton saith, *It is one thing to enter into the Church, (for that agreeth to such as were sometime without) another thing to speak of the Infants of Believers, who were never out of the Church, and so cannot be said to enter into it.* Grounds and Ends, &c. pag. 132, 133. and therefore it is a mistake to say or think of such Elders, as concurred with the Synod, That what is done by them towards the children of Church-members, being now adult, is an admitting of them into Membership; for this those children had afore they were adult, and therefore they are not now admitted into it.

But to leave this: Why should the Reverend Author suggest such a thing into the mindes of his Readers, *" That the Elders in their Practice do differ from their Doctrine, and teach one thing in the Synod, and in their Practice do contrary?* Were it not more suitable to Love (which thinketh not evil, 1 Cor. 13. nor receiveth a reproach against ones Neighbour, Psal. 15.) to endeavour to bring such Elders, as are thus faulty (if indeed there be any) to Repentance for their failing therein, rather then to give occasion of misapprehensions against them, by writing thus of them? It may well be called *misapprehension*; for there are few of the Elders, in comparison, that have yet put the children of Church-members to a publick owning of the covenant, afore the time of their admission to full communion: and for those few that have done it, as this was not an admitting of them into Membership, for that they had before; so it would be hard to prove, that when this was done, that their Infants might be Baptized, which is the case the Synod speaks of; it would be hard (we say) to prove that the parents, who so did, were not qualified according as the fifth Proposition describeth. And therefore to give occasion of other thoughts, not only against some few of the Elders, but even of all, for what is here intimated, is not of some only, but of all
alike

alike without difference; what may be thought of this, we leave to the further consideration of the Reverend Author.

To the second Argument of the Synod, *That the children of the Parents in question, are either children of the Covenant, or strangers from the Covenant; either holy, or unclean; either within the Church, or without; either such as have God for their God, or are without God in the world: but he that considers the Proposition, will not affirm the latter concerning these children; and the former being granted, infers their right to Baptism.*

To this the Reverend Author answereth, "*That the more he considers the Proposition, the less he findes in it to evince the former, and the more to conclude the latter.*"

Ans. Now the latter is, *that the children of the Parents in question, are strangers from the Covenant, not holy, but unclean, and without the Church, and such as are without God in the world: And if the Reverend Author finde so much to conclude thus of the children of Church-members, which Members understand the Doctrines of Faith, and publicly assent thereto; are not scandalous in life, but thus and further qualified, as in the Proposition is expressed: if he finde much to conclude thus of these children, if he had expressed any part thereof, it might have been taken into consideration; but nothing being express'd, how can it? A meer contrary Affirmation, how can it go for a sufficient Confutation?*

As for that which he addeth, "*That if a man have no more then the Proposition holds forth, he may be a stranger from the Covenant, unclean, and without the Church, &c.*" Is not this spoken of grown persons, and therefore how is the Synods Argument hereby touched, which speaketh of little children? Nor is it easily proved, that a grown person, who was admitted in minority, and is now qualified as the Proposition expresseth, that such a grown person is now a stranger from the Covenant, and without the Church, and without God in the world, and this in respect of his external state, or being in the Church visible; we see not that this is proved at all. For, as for Rom. 9. 6, 7, 8. which is here alledged, *They are not all Israel, which are of Israel, &c.* the Text may prove, that they are not all elected of God,

or sincere Believers, who in regard of external relation are Members of the visible Church; and this will be easily granted: but for Membership in the Church-visible, of which is our question, that text hath nothing in it at all to prove, That men who were members of this Church in their minority, being now qualified as the Synod expresseth, that these are now *without such Membership and externall state*; this is not proved at all by this Text. For, if we shall so say, we shall make the Apostle to contradict himself; for, of these very persons and people, of whom he saith, *They are not all Israel*, not all children, not all the children of God, &c. of these very persons and people he saith, *ver. 4. that they are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises*; that is, they were Gods adopted children in regard of external Covenant, and were Members of the Church-visible, and yet these were not *all Israel*, that is, they were not all Gods Israel by election and spiritual regeneration. Thus the Apostles words are easily reconciled. But how shall they be reconciled, if the *latter*, as well as the *former*, be meant of the Church-visible? Can they be *Israelites*, and not *Israel*, in the same respect? Can they in respect of external state be partakers of *Adoption, Gods Covenant and Promises, &c.* and so be Church-members, and yet in regard of the same estate, be no Church-members at all, nor in the Church-covenant at all? It is not easie to conceive how this can be; and therefore the words in *Rom. 9. 6, 7, 8.* are not fitly applied to prove that men, who were Church-members in their minority, may be qualified as the fifth Proposition expresseth, and yet now be *strangers from the Covenant, and without the Church, in respect of their visible and externall state.*

Whereas the Synod, for a third Argument, saith, *That to deny this Proposition, would be* 1. *To straiten the grace of Christ in the Gospel-dispensation, and to make the Church in New-Testament-times, in worse case, relating to their children successively, then were the Jews of old.* 2. *To render the Jews, when they shall be called, in a worse condition then under the Legal administration: contrary so Jer. 30. 20. Ezek. 37. 25, 26.* 3. *To deny the application of the initiatory,*

initiator Seal to such as regularly stand in the Church and Covenant, to whom the Mosaiical dispensation, say the first Institution appointed it to be applied, Gen. 17. 9, 10. Joh. 7. 22, 23. 4. To break the Covenant, by denying the initiator Seal to those that are in covenant, Gen. 17. 9, 10, 14.

To this the Reverend Author answereth, "That the contrary to all
 "and every one of these is true: for, 1. It enlargeth the grace of Christ
 "in the Gospel-dispensation, by shewing that Christian Churches are in a
 "more spiritual and gracious frame then the Jews of old were, under
 "Legal dispensations, &c.

Ans. Suppose that Christian Churches be in a more spiritual and gracious frame then were the Jews under the Legal dispensation, yet if then such Parents as the Proposition describes, might have the initiator Seal applied to their Infants, and now may not; how can it be denied, but that now the Christian Churches are in a worse case, relating to their children successively, then the Church of the Jews was? For then such Parents might have their children circumcised, but now they may not have them baptized, if this Proposition be denied. And though the grace of Christ may be now enlarged in other respects, yet in respect of children it is not enlarged, but *straitened*, by denying this Proposition: except we shall say, that for Parents to have the Seal of the Covenant applied to them and their children, is no testimony of Gospel-grace at all, which cannot be said truly; and therefore the Synods Argument in this particular stands good.

2. Saith the Reverend Author, "It declareth that the state of the
 "Jews, when they shall be called, will be far better then it was under Legal
 "dispensations— for under the Law their light and holiness was defective—
 "but when they shall be called, they shall have a farre greater
 "measure of light and holiness then was to be found in former ages—

Ans. Suppose this be granted, the question is not about their Holiness and light, but about their children, of whom it is evident, that if the Parents were qualified as this Proposition expresseth, those children might then be circumcised: and the Texts alledged, viz. Jer. 30. 20. Ezek. 37. 25, 26. do shew, that when they shall be called, their children shall be in as good estate as formerly: but

how can this be, if the Parents may be qualified as is expressed, and yet may not have their children baptized? Is not this a rendring of them, in respect of their children, in a worse condition then formerly?

For the third Particular, the Reverend Author answereth, "*That the deniall of the Proposition doth not deny (in sum) what the Synod saith it doth, but the contrary.*"

Ans. In what the Synod here saith, there are three Particulars contained or included: 1. *That the Moscaicall dispensation, and first Institution of the initiatory Seal, did appoint that Seal to be applied to such as stood regularly in the Church and Covenant.* 2. *That the children in question do regularly stand in the Church and Covenant.* 3. *That the deniall of the Proposition, doth deny the application of the Seal to such as the Moscaicall dispensation appointed it to be applied unto.* Of these Particulars, the first cannot be denied; for it is undeniably proved by the Texts alledged, viz. Gen. 17. 9, 10. Job 7. 22, 23. and the third Particular is plain of it self: all the doubt therefore must be about the second, viz. *Whether the children in question do regularly stand in the Church and Covenant:* But for this the Synod hath given divers Proofs in their first and second Arguments; which Proofs we do not see taken off by what the Reverend Author hath said thereto.

The fourth Particular is answered by a plain deniall of what there the Synod affirmeth, viz. "*That to deny the Proposition, doth not break Gods Covenant, by denying the initiatory Seal to those that are in Covenant.*"

Ans. Yet nothing can be more plain, then that denying Circumcision to them that were in the Covenant, was a breaking of Gods Covenant; for it is expressly so called, Gen. 17. 9, 10, 14. If therefore the children spoken of be in the Covenant, how can the deniall of Baptism to them be any other then is said? and that they are in the Covenant, the Synod gave sundry Proofs in their first and second Arguments.

So much for Defence of the third Argument.

The fourth Argument of the Synod for confirming this fifth Proposition, is this: *Confederate visible Believers, though but in the lowest*

lowest degree such, are to have their children baptized: But the Parents in question are such, at least in some degree. For, 1. Charity may observe in them sundry positive arguments for it, witness the terms of the Proposition, and nothing evident against it.

To this the Reverend Author answereth, by denying the minor in the Argument, and affirming the contrary to the first Reason here mentioned; viz. "That all that is said in the Proposition, is no sufficient ground for Charity to account these Parents, to be Believers in the least degree.

Ans. But if there be sundry positive arguments for Charity thus to judge of them, and nothing evident to the contrary, as the Synod argueth; why then should we judge otherwise of them? When such Church-members, as were admitted in their minority, do understand the Doctrine of Faith, and publicly assent thereto, are not scandalous in life, but do solemnly own the Covenant, wherein they give up themselves to the Lord, &c. is all this nothing for Charity to go upon in accounting them Believers? no, not in the least degree? we conceive Charity wants sufficient ground to judge otherwise. See more in Defence of the first Argument.

But, saith the Reverend Author, "Let them show how faith was wrought, and how it works in them, and then the Church will have ground for their charitable judgement concerning their fitness, &c.

Ans. What proof is there, that except thus be done, there can be no ground for the charitable judgement that is mentioned? Sure it is, there is no mention that such a thing was performed by the Eunuch, nor required of him by Philip, Acts 8. and yet he was baptized upon Profession of his Faith in Christ, though there is no mention, that to shew how his Faith was wrought in him, was either done by him, or required of him: and therefore we see no reason to the contrary, but that when that is done which is mentioned in the Proposition, there may be ground for Charity to account them Believers, though they come not up to what the Reverend Author requireth, of declaring how their Faith was wrought in them.

2. The Synod saith, *The children of the godly, though qualified but as the persons in the Proposition, are said to be Faithfull.*

Tit. 1, 6.

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The Reverend Author answereth, "*Nor are the children of the* godly, qualified but as in the Proposition, said to be Faithfull in Tit. 1. So his Answer is an expresse deniall of what the Synod here saith. But to say the children in Tu. 1. are not called Faithfull, is directly to gainsay the Text, which doth expressely so call them: and that these Children that are called Faithful in Tu. 1. were qualified above what the Proposition requireth, is not proved at all. For the Text that calls them Faithful, saith no more of them, but that they are not accused of Riot, or unruly. And if this be sufficient for accounting them Faithful, those whom the Proposition describeth may much more be so accounted; because they are not only free from Unruliness and Riot, but partakers of sundry other good qualifications, which do amount further.

3. Whereas the Synod saith, Children of the covenant, as the Parents in Question are, have frequently the beginnings of grace wrought in them in younger years, as Scripture and experience shew. Instance Joseph, Samuel, &c. hence this sort of Persons shewing nothing to the contrary, are in charity, or so ecclesiastical reputation, visible Believers.

The Reverend Author answereth, "*That the Parents in question* were indeed children of the Covenant in their infancy or minority, but if "*when they are adult, they do not covenant for themselves and their seed,* "*being fully qualified, they cannot then be fully called Children of the Co-* "*venant, but Transgressors of the Covenant, and breakers of it.*

Ans. 1. If they be breakers of it, then sure they are comprehended in it: for, how can men break the Covenant, wh ch they are not in? therefore, as it is here expressly confessed, that they were children of the Covenant in their minority, so the same is by Consequence confessed of them being adult; for otherwise, how could they be then said to break the Covenant?

2. If the Parents in question were Children of the Covenant in their Infancy and minority, as the Reverend Author acknowledgeth they were, this suits well enough with the purpose and scope of the Synod in this place, which is expressly said to be this, that such children have frequently the beginnings of grace wrought in them in their younger years; and such as had grace begun in them in their younger years, why

why should not charity think it is *there still*, when nothing appears to the contrary? for he that once begins that good work of grace, is not wont to *forfake that work* of his own hands, but to *perfect it* until the day of Christ, Psal. 138. 8. Phil. 1. 6.

Further, saith the Reverend Author, "*This Argument is fallacious, because it argues from some particulars, to infer a general affirmatively.* Some children of the Covenant have had the beginnings of grace wrought in them in their younger years, therefore all persons of this sort, &c. If the Reverend Author had expressed the Synods Argument as they expressed it, it would not then have appeared so *fallacious*, as the alteration of their words may make it.

For, whereas they said, *Children of the Covenant have frequently the beginnings of grace wrought in them in their younger years*, for which they produced eight or nine Instances from Scripture: all these Instances, and that frequency, for Proof of which they were alledged; are now all left out, and in stead thereof it is rendered *some Children of the Covenant, &c.* and whereas the inference which the Synod makes is thus expressed, *viz. hence this sort of Persons &c. now the term All, which was not in before, is expressly put in thus, All Persons of this sort; &c.* which alteration may indeed obscure the strength of the Argument. But let it be reduced to what it first was, and then let the judicious Reader consider whether it be *fallacious*, or *firm*, whether there be *weakness* or *weight* in it. Thus it was; If Children of the Covenant have frequently the beginnings of grace wrought in them in their younger years, then this sort of Persons shewing nothing to the contrary, are in charity, or to ecclesiastical reputation, visible Believers: But so it is. Ergo. The Assumption here is manifestly proved by those many Instances in Scripture alledged, and by Experience; and the Consequence we hope is not *fallacious*, but found and good: for if it be frequently thus, why should not charity believe it is thus in this sort of persons, where nothing appears to the contrary.

4. The Synod having said, *That they that are regularly in the Church, (as the Parents in question be) are visible Saints in the account of Scripture: for the Church is in Scripture, account a*
company,

company of Saints, 1 Cor. 14. 33. & 1. 2.

The Reverend Author Answereth, "That both the Assertion and
 "the Proof of it are to be denied. The Assertion is not true, that the
 "Parents in question are regularly in the Church: Infants, and Children
 "in minority of confederate believers, are in the Church by their Pa-
 "rents Covenanting for them, 1 Cor. 7. 14. But Parents are not so,
 "till &c.

Ans. It is here again confessed, that Infants and Children in minority, are regularly in the Church, but not so when they are adult and come to be Parents: but of their continuing in the Church, notwithstanding their coming to be adult, something hath been said before, and more may in the sixth Argument, *Partic. 3.*

But whereas it is said, "The Proof is to be denied, and is not apposite: we conceive, it cannot be denied to be very apposite for the purpose for which the Synod doth alledge it, which is to prove, that they that are Regularly in the Church, are in Scripture account visible Saints; and the words of the Texts alledged, are so plain and apposite for this purpose, as we conceive nothing can be more. Whether the Parents in question be such, or no; regularly in the Church, and so Saints, or not, is another thing, for which we conceive much hath and may be said: but the Texts alledged were not produced by the Synod for that purpose, and therefore though they be not plain for Proof of that, yet if they be plain and apt enough for the purpose for which they were produced by the Synod, that may suffice, though they prove not this other, to which the Reverend Author doth apply them.

5. Saith the Synod, Being in Covenant and baptized, they have Faith and Repentance indefinitely given to them in the Promise, and sealed up in Baptism, Deut. 30. 6. which continues valid, and so a valid Testimony for them, while they do not reject it.

To this the Reverend Author in his Answer makes mention of a distinction "Between the grace of the Covenant, and the Covenant of
 "Grace, in regard of externall means; between the Elect, in whom God
 "works the Grace promised in the Covenant so powerfully, that they
 "shall not reject it, and the rest who have the outward means of grace
 "till they reject them, as did Esau— and concludes, that Such as reject
 "th;

"the offers of grace, and living under the means of grace, do remain un-believers, cannot be said to have Faith and Repentance indefinitely given to them in the Promise.

Ans. But is there any Proof of the contrary to what the Synod affirmeth? It seems none at all. For, when the Synod saith, *The Covenant which promiseth Faith and Repentance is a valid Testimony for them, while they do not reject it*; and the Reverend Author saith, *"That such as do reject the offers of grace, have not Faith and Repentance given to them in the Promise"*: These are not contrary, nor at all inconsistent. For the Synod never said nor meant, that the grace of Faith and Repentance are given by the Covenant to them that are breakers of the Covenant, and reject the offers of grace, and living under the means of grace, do still remain unbelievers: the Synod never said, that the grace of Faith and Repentance are given to these by the Promise; but by that word, *while they do not reject it*, do plainly imply the contrary. And therefore what the Synod here saith, may be sound and good, for all that the Reverend Author alledgeth. If their Doctrine here be not right, then it must be said, that the Covenant, in which God promiseth to *circumcise the hearts of his people, and of their seed*, Deut. 30. 6. is no Promise that God will give them Faith and Repentance, nor any valid Testimony for them that be will do it, though they for their parts do not reject it. And we suppose none will say this. What may be said of them, who when adult, are Breakers of the Covenant, and do reject the offers of grace, is one thing; and what may be hoped and said of them who do not so reject, is another. The Synod speaks of these latter, and the Reverend Author of the former; and therefore the one cannot overthrow the other.

The Synod concludes this fourth Argument, by adding as followeth; viz. *Yet it doth not necessarily follow, that these persons are immediately fit for the Lords Supper; the Reason rendered, is, Because though in a latitude of expression they are to be accounted Believers, or in numero fidelium, as even Infants in covenant are; yet they may want that ability to examine themselves, and that speciall exercise of faith, which is requisite to that Ordinance, as was said upon Propos. 4.*

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Ans. It is here again confessed, that *Infants and Children in minority, are regularly in the Church, but not so when they are adult and come to be Parents: but of their continuing in the Church, notwithstanding their coming to be adult, something hath been said before, and more may in the sixth Argument, Partic. 3.*

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To this the Reverend Author saith, 1. " *If any man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God, 1 Pet. 4. 11. The New-Testament nowhere alloweth that latitude of expression, to call men Believers, who,* &c.

Ans. Though it be the duty of all, if they speak, to speak as the Oracles of God, yet it doth not follow from thence, that none may have the term *Believers* applied to them, except the term be found to be applied in the New Testament: for then the name *Trinity*, *Sacrament*, and many other, would be unlawful, as not being found in the New Testament, no nor in the Old; yet we suppose the Reverend Author would not count the use of these terms unlawful. How often doth himself use the terms of *Par ratio*, *Personall membership*, *Mediate*, and *Immediate members*, and others, and yet they are terms not found in all the Scripture: and therefore if the term *Believers* be not found applied in the New Testament to the persons spoken of, yet if the thing it self be found, and the matter be so delivered as becomes the *Oracles of God*, that is, with such reverence, purity, &c. as is meet, we suppose that Rule of *speaking as the Oracles of God*, is not violated, though the term it self were not so used in the New Testament, nor yet in the Old. And for the thing it self, the Synod hath given four or five Arguments to prove, that the persons spoken of are *visible Believers*; which Arguments we do not see satisfied by what the Reverend Author saith thereto.

2. The Synod having said, *That the persons spoken of may be counted in numero fidelium, as even Infants in Covenant are.*

The Reverend Author answereth, " *They cannot be so accounted, because Infants are looked at onely in the Parents covenant, being not capable of covenanting for themselves, as men are: so that there is not par ratio between them.*

Ans. Though Infants be not capable of covenanting for themselves, as men are, yet their covenanting, or being in Covenant, is not the thing here intended by the Synod, but their being *Believers*, or in *numero fidelium*; of which the Reverend Author saith nothing. But the thing the Synod here intimateth, is this, that as even Infants in Covenant are counted *Believers*, or in *numero fidelium*, so may the Parents spoken of.

3. Whereas

3. Whereas the Synod saith, *They may want that ability to examine themselves, and that speciall exercise of faith which is requisite to this Ordinance.*

The Reverend Author answereth, "*That visible want of this ability, and of this exercise of faith, doth argue a visible want of that faith which is to be examined and exercised, and is a just barre to the admittance of such into immediate and personall Church-membership, as well as to the Lords Supper.*"

Ans. Admittance into Membership is not here spoken of at all by the Synod: for the persons spoken of, are counted by the Synod to have been in the state of Membership long afore now, even in their infancy or minority; and therefore if the want of the ability mentioned, were a just barre to such admittance, yet this concerns not the persons spoken of. But is this which is here affirmed certain and clear, that want of the ability and exercise spoken of, doth argue want of the very being of Faith? May there not be the being and truth of that grace, even there where the exercise of it is much wanting? Plain it is, that our Saviour blames his Disciples, and Peter, for the want of the exercise of faith, Mat. 8. & 14. Mark 4. Luke 8. 25. and yet it were hard to say, that the being of faith was now wanting in them: for then we must say, either that faith once had, may afterwards be lost and gone, or else that these Disciples before this time never had faith; neither of which, we conceive, can be said truly. How plain is it, that some for their weakness and small ability in grace, and the exercise of it, are compared to a bruised Reed, and to smoking Flax, Mat. 12. 20. and yet when it is said, Christ will not break such Reed, nor quench such Flax, it appeareth thereby, that notwithstanding all this weakness, there may be the being and truth of the thing in such Souls. And for ability to examine themselves, cannot this be wanting. but the want of the being of faith must be inferred thence? What shall we then say to Souls in such a case as Heman's, Psal. 88. who complains, that Gods wrath lay hard upon him, and that he was shut up, and could not come forth; that God seemed to cast off his Soul, and to hide his face from him; that Gods fierce wrath went over him; that Gods terrours had cut him off; and that hereby he was as distracted, and this even from his youth up? No

can we think that in such case he was able to examine himself? Can distracted persons do so? it seems not: and yet this *Heman* was not without the grace of faith for all this. And therefore we cannot say that want of ability to examine one's self; or of the speciall exercise of faith, doth alwayes argue the want of that faith which is to be examined and exercised: and therefore what the Synod here saith may still stand, That the persons spoken of may be Believers, and yet want that ability to examine themselves, and that speciall exercise of faith which is requisite to that Ordinance of the Lords Supper.

So much for Defence of the fourth Argument for confirming the fifth Proposition.

The fifth Argument of the Synod for confirming this fifth Proposition, is this: That the usuall of Baptism to the children in question, is a dangerous tendency in it to Irreligion and Apostacy; because to deny them to have any part in the Lord, is the way to cause them to cease from fearing the Lord; witness *Josh. 22. 24, 25, 27.* But to deny them, and so their children successively, to be in the Church, or Members of it, and so to have right to Baptism, is to deny them to have any part in the Lord; and therefore it tends to cause a ceasing from fearing the Lord, and so tends to Irreligion and Apostacy.

Now what saith the Reverend Author to this in his Reply? that which he saith, is, "1. The children in question, being children of Parents who are not in full communion with the Church, if such be denied to have any part in the Lord, it is the degenerate Parents fault, and not the Churches. 2. The children in question are not children of the Church, for the Parents have cut off the entail of the Covenant from themselves and their seed, by not confederating for themselves and theirs regularly."

Ans. 1. Here then is an acknowledgement, that the children in question, when Baptism and Church-membership is denied them, are thereby acknowledged to have no part in the Lord, and so to be in a way of ceasing from fearing the Lord: and is not this the very thing affirmed by the Synod?

2. Whereas the Reverend Author saith, That these children are
now

now in such a state, through *the fault of the degenerate Parents*, who do not regularly enter into full communion: It hath been shewed before, That these Parents, though not yet in full communion, *do not put in any bar to either the Merit, Ship and Baptism of their children*: and indeed, when the Parents are such as the Proposition describeth, viz. *Not scandalous in life, but understanding and assenting to the Doctrine of Faith, and solemnly owning the Covenant, and therein giving up themselves and their children to the Lord, &c.* how, for all this, these Parents should be the cause that their children have *no part in the Lord*, but do *cease from fearing him*; how this can be, we confess we do not understand. Can Parents, by giving up themselves and their children to the Lord, be notwithstanding the cause that their children have *no part in the Lord*, though they be Parents that *thus do*, and be qualified for it, as in the Proposition is expressed? Is their giving up themselves and their children to the Lord, a cause to cut off their children from having any part in the Lord? or is their present *unfitness for full communion*, a cause of such loss and misery. though they be and do what is mentioned, and all that the Proposition expresseth? we see no sufficient ground to apprehend so: but when the Parents are and do as is mentioned, we fear it is not they that are the cause of their childrens loss and misery expressed, but they rather, who deny their Baptism and Church-membership.

3. Saith the Reverend Author, "*That this denial hath a dangerous Tendency to Irreligion and Apostacy, is not proved by them, nor can be.*"

Ans. But if this denial do deny them to have any part in the Lord, and so make them *cease from fearing the Lord*, how can it be but as is said? can men *cease from fearing the Lord*, and from having any part in him, and yet this not tend to Apostacy and Irreligion? Now the Reverend Author confesseth, that these children have *no part in the Lord*, though he say it is through the Parents fault; though if the Parents be so qualified as is said, it will be hard to prove that this comes to pass through their fault; and then whence is it, but from them that causlessly deny their Baptism and Church-membership? and if his denial do cause that they have *no part in the Lord*, doth it not also cause their Irreligion and Apostacy?

"That Text Josh. 22. 24, 25. saith the Reverend Author;
 "speaks nothing for their advantage in this case.

Ans. Let it be considered for what purpose the Synod alledged that Text, and then it will appear that it speaks for them. Now the purpose of the Synod in producing that text, is plainly this, *but to deny such Children to have a part in the Lord, is the way to make them cease from fearing the Lord*: and what can be more plainly spoken, then this is spoken in that Text? But why doth this Text speak nothing for the advantage of the Synod? The Reason that is given for this, is, "*Because the men there spoken of, were Members in full Communion; and their children, when they were grown up, were joyned in Covenant by a solemn Covenant every third year, Deut. 26. 17, 18. so that they had a part in the Lord successively, from which if they had been excluded causelessly, it might have caused their Children to cease from fearing the Lord.*"

Ans. Suppose all this be so, this seems not to weaken the intent of the Synod in producing this Text, but to strengthen it: For, if denying them that have been in full Communion to have any part in the Lord, may cause even such to cease from fearing the Lord, how much more may this be caused in them that have not yet had this full Communion? may not one think, that such as have enjoyed Communion with God in all his Ordinances, will not be so easily drawn away from fearing the Lord, as those that never had such full Communion? and yet the Reverend Author doth acknowledge this might have befallen the former, and therefore how much more may this be found in the other, of whom the Synod speaketh? which things considered, it seems plain that when it is said, that Text Josh. 22. speaks nothing for the Synods advantage in this case, that this saying will not hold.

The Synod having said, *That the owning of the Children of those that successively continue in Covenant to be a part of the Church, is far from being destructive to the purity and prosperity of the Church, and Religion therein, as some conceive.*

The Reverend Author Answereth, "*That they who so conceive, have such grounds of that persuasion, as will not easily be removed, nor are so much as shaken by any thing said by the Synod.*"

Ans.

Ans. If such a *perswasion*, That the children of those who continue in Covenant, are no part of the Church, be a *Perswasion upon grounds that cannot be removed nor shaken*; then it must follow, that the Church and the Covenant, which is the *formalis ratio* of the Church, comprehends not *Children*, but Parents onely, or grown persons: and then the *Antipædobaptists* have won the day; for by what right can Children be Baptized, if they be not in the Covenant, nor any part of the Church, though their Parents be? Sure to us it seems a well-grounded *perswasion*, that if the Parents be and continue in Covenant, the Children of such are part of the Church, and ought to be so owned, and that this is no wayes destructive to the *Purity and Prosperity of the Church, and Religion therein*. If the Parents did not continue in the Covenant, then there might be some question, whether the Children be part of the Church: but it is plain, that the Synod speaks of the *Children of those that continue in the Covenant*; and if any think it to be a well-grounded *perswasion*, that the Parents may continue in the Covenant, and yet the Children of such Parents are no part of the Church, we confess we see no sufficient grounds for such a *perswasion*. For, the Reverend Author doth here confess, "That it is true, that the frame of the Covenant runs to us, and to our Seed after us in their Generations, pag. 32. And if this be true, is it not then true, that if the Parents continue in the Covenant, the Seed of such Parents are also part of the Church? for how can they be said to be in the Covenant, which is the constituting Form of the Church, and yet be no part of the Church, which is constituted thereby.

But, saith the Reverend Author, "This must be understood and applied suitably, to the different constitution of Churches, under different administrations of the Covenant, under the Old-Testament, and under the Gospel.

Ans. Let this be granted, yet as long as the thing it self is not denied, which must not be denied, for he confesseth it to be true, viz. That the covenant runs to us, and to our Seed after us in their Generations: So long as this is not denied, the difference in other things, between the Old-Testament and the New, will not weaken our Cause at all. For, though for constitution of Churches, the Church

was then *National*, and now *Congregational*; and though the administration of the Covenant was then under many Types and Ceremonies, which are now removed: and notwithstanding any other difference that can be named, yet if there be not this difference also, that the Covenant did run to them, and their Seed in their Generations, but not to us, and our Seed in like sort; if this difference also be not asserted, we see not how it can be avoided, but even now as well as then, if the Parents continue in covenant, the Children do so also, and so are part of the Church: and so what the Synod affirmeth is gained. For it cannot be said, that though it was *spoken*, yet it is not so now, except we shall deny what the Reverend Author confesseth to be true, that the *same of the covenant* (did not onely run to them and to their Seed, but also) runs to us, and our Seed in their Generations. And if this be true, then what the Synod gathereth from it is true also, that God hath so framed his covenant, and the constitution of his Church thereby, as to design a continuation and propagation of his Kingdome therein, from one Generation to another. For it must needs be so, if the Covenant runs to us, and to our Seed after us in their Generations.

Whereas the Synod saith, *That to keep in the line, and under the influence and efficacy of this covenant of God, in the true way to the Churches glory.*

The Answer of the Reverend Author, in sum, is this, "*That it is so indeed, when there is a succession of Faith made visible to the Churches charitable judgement; but not so, when such a Membership is set up in Christian Churches, whereby Infants shall be Baptized by right from such Parents as are not in full communion: for what influence and efficacy hath the covenant upon such Parents?*"

Whereto the answer is, That if the Parents be qualified as this Proposition expresseth, there is manifest influence of the Covenant upon them, though yet they be not come so far as to be fit for full communion. For, when they being admitted in minority, are now, when adult, not onely free from scandal in life, but also endowed with a competency of knowledge in the Doctrine of faith, and solemnly assent thereto, and own the Covenant, and therein give up themselves and their children to the Lord; we conceive all this doth import some influence

influence and efficacy of the Covenant upon them: but if for all this, they shall be disowned from having any part in the Church and Covenant of God, how then can that be denied which the Synod here saith, *That by this cutting off, and disavowing the Covenant, Zion is hindered from being an Eternal Excellency, and the joy of many generations?* For, whatever joy it may be to the first generation, yet if all that follow, though qualified as the Proposition expresseth, be nevertheless denied to have any part in the Covenant and Church of God, till fit for full communion, we do not see how such following generations can be any great excellency or joy at all.

The Synod having said, *That this progress of the Covenant establisheth the Church, Deut. 29. 13. Jer. 30. 20. and that therefore the contrary doth disestablish it.*

The Reverend Author answereth, "*That the Argument is to be denied; for it will not follow, that if God did establish the Church of the Jews by such a successive progress of the Covenant, Deut. 29. 13. therefore he doth so now, pag. 33.*"

A. Why doth it not follow, that if God did establish the Church of the Jews by a progress of the Covenant, that therefore he doth so now? Is not that true, which the Reverend Author confesseth to be true, *That the frame of the Covenant runs to us, and our seed after us in their generations?* and is not that true also which the Synod here saith, (though the Reverend Author saith nothing to it) *That God was an holy God, and loved the purity and glory of the Church in the Old Testament, when he went in this way of a successive progress of the Covenant?* we suppose this cannot be denied; and therefore if a progress of the Covenant did establish the Church then, why not so now? Shall we think that the holy God did not so regard the purity of his Church in those times, and therefore did then establish the Church in this way, which now he will not do, as being now more careful of the purity of his Church? we fear that to say this, would be to the dishonour of Gods Holiness and Glory. And plain it is, that it is the same Kingdome of God, that is, the same Church-estate for substance and kind, which is taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles, *Mat. 21. 43.* and therefore the Gentiles are said to be fellow-heirs, and of the same Body with them, *Ephes. 3. 6.* And therefore what

should hinder, but that if a *progress* of the Covenant was a means to establish the Church *then*, it may be the same in *these days* also ?

The Synod having said in the conclusion of their fifth Argument for confirming this fifth Proposition, *That the more holy, reforming, and glorious that the times are or shall be, the more eminently is a successive continuation, and propagation of the Church therein designed, promised, and intended.* And having for this alleged these Scriptures, *Isa. 60. 15. & 59. 21. Ezek. 37. 25--28. Psal. 102. 16--28. Jer. 32. 39.*

The Reverend Author applies all these very Texts to "*the Church of the Jews under the New Jerusalem; which Church, he saith, must consist, for the matter of it, of elect and sincere Believers only, both they and their children successively, to the end of the world: for which he alledgeth the Texts afore-mentioned, pag. 33.*"

Ans. It is freely granted, that the Church of the Jews, when they shall be called and converted, shall be *very holy and glorious*; and yet it may be questioned, whether that Church shall have none in it, but *only elect and sincere Believers, both they and their children to the end of the world.* For, when Christ shall come, the *Kingdome of Heaven*, that is to say, the Church, though it be compared to *Virgins*, in respect of much Ecclesiastical Purity, yet those *Virgins* are some of them *foolish Virgins*, that had no oyle in their vessels with their lamps, and so must have the door of the Marriage-Chamber shut against them, *Matth. 25.* therefore they were not all sincere Believers and elect: and therefore it may be a question, whether the Church of the Jews at that time will be so free from Hypocrites, as is said.

2. If these Scriptures, *Isa. 60. 15. & 59. 21.* and the rest, do prove, that *when the Jews shall be called*, it shall be with them as is said; then what the Synod here saith is gained, and stands good, viz. *That in holy, reforming, and most glorious times, there shall be a continuation and propagation of the Church from parents to children, from generation to generation; which is the very thing which is here affirmed by the Synod.*

3. Though the Reverend Author do here suggest this difference between that Church of the Jews under the *New Jerusalem*, and the *Gentile*.

Gentile Churches; that these latter shall have "*Close Hypocrites* "*creeping into them, and the children of Believers, by their degeneracy* "*when adult, stopping the successive progress of the Covenant, which in* "*the Church of the Jews shall be otherwise: yet sith the Scripture* faith, that *the Nations of them that are saved, shall walk in the light of that New Jerusalem, Rev. 21. and that then the Lord shall be King in all the earth; and that there shall be one Lord, and his Name one, Zech. 14. and that the Name of the New Jerusalem shall be written upon Philadelphia, a Church of the Gentiles, Rev. 3.* it may seem upon these considerations and the like, that there will at that time be good conformity between the Church of the Jews, and Gentile Churches, and no such disproportion or difference, that in the *one* there should be a *continuation* and *propagation* of the Church and Covenant from Parents and children successively, but in the *other* not so. We see no ground for believing such a *difference*, but for ought that doth yet appear, if there shall be such a glory in the *one*, as that there shall be a *successive progress of the Covenant* therein, there shall or may be the like in the *Gentile Churches* also. And to conceive any essential difference between either Jews or Gentiles *then*, and Gentiles *now*, as to the frame of the Covenant it self (whatever difference there may be as to the measures of grace, &c. as is said in the Synods Result, p. 9.) is a conception that we see no ground for in Scripture.

Whereas the Reverend Author saith, pag. 34. "*That the children* "*of Church-members in this Country are commonly known to be Pro-* "*fane, Vain, Licentious, Vicious, Stubborn, Proud, &c. and complains,* "*That yet these are accepted into immediate Personall Member-* "*ship.*

The Answer is, 1. As before, That we think there is no accepting of Members children, when adult, into Membership, but an accepting of them unto full Communion, when they are fit for it; and an acknowledging of such and others to be Members already, as having had it from their birth or minority, and having not since been regularly, in any way of God, cut off from the same. To call this an accepting of them into Membership, we think is very improper.

2. If the children of Church-members generally were *commonly known to be so Vicious and Profane*, as is said; this were matter of

great humiliation and grief to us all: but we hope it is too much to say so of the generality, or greatest part of them, there being better things appearing in many.

3. Be it that they are so *Vicious*, or not, we think there is great reason that they should be carefully watched over by Elders of Churches, and all Superiours, that so their corruptions and sins might be mortified, and they furthered to the attainment of that saving grace of God in Christ Jesus.

And whereas the Reverend Author makes an Objection, "*That if they be so Vicious, they have the more need to be under the Watch, Discipline, and Government of the Church.*" And in Answer thereto, saith, "*That it cannot rationally be expected that they will submit themselves thereto, but will disregard and slight the same; and that acceptance with God, or blessing on such means cannot be expected, because God limits his Blessing to his own Appointments,* p. 34, 35.

The Answer is, That it hath been proved afore by seven or eight Arguments in Propos. 3. *That these children are by Gods appointment under the Watch, Discipline, and Government of the Church;* which Arguments have been formerly vindicated and cleared from what the Reverend Author hath said against the same: and therefore for what is here said, *That the exercise of Church-discipline towards such, cannot be expected to be accepted of God, or blessed by him, because it wants his Appointment;* we know not how to entertain this saying, except there were some better proof for it, which here is but nakedly delivered, without any proof at all: and therefore the exercise of Church-discipline towards the children spoken of, may be appointed of God, accepted of him, and blessed by him, for ought that is here said to the contrary.

And whereas it is said, "*That it cannot rationally be expected, that such persons will submit themselves to Church-discipline.*"

Though we know but little of the exercise of Church-discipline towards such, yet experience doth testify, that to some it hath, by the blessing of God, been profitable, and that they have submitted to it, and been bettered by it.

Lastly, The Reverend Author did a little afore in this same Page, pag. 34. mention the *Vigilancy and Faithful Care and Endeavour*

of *Church-Elders* towards the Children mentioned, as a way or means for conveying Religion down to after-Generations, which we for our parts conceive to be sound and good. But then how can this stand which is there said, that such persons are not under the *Watch, Discipline and Government of the Church*? For, doth not the *Vigilancy of Church-Elders*, import some kinde of *Church-watchfulness*? Can there be such *Vigilancy, Care and Endeavours* towards such as are not under the watch of the Church at all? or can such *Vigilancy, Care and Endeavour of Church-Elders*, be a means to convey Religion down to after-generations, and yet Church-watchfulness toward such be without acceptance with God, and without any blessed fruit, either to the Church or to the persons spoken of? It seems these things do not well cohere:

So much for *Defence of the fifth Argument*, for confirming this fifth Proposition.

The sixth Argument which the Synod here useth, is, *Because the Parents in question are personal, immediate, and yet-continuing Members of the Church.* 1. That they are personall Members, or Members in their own persons, they say appears, 1. *Because they are personally holy*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. 2. *Are Baptized in their own persons.* 3. *Are personally under Discipline.* 4. *Are personally, by means of the Covenant, in a visible state of Salvation.* 5. *When they commit iniquity, they personally break the covenant*, Jer. 31. 2, 10. Ezek. 16. therefore they are personally in it.

To this the Reverend Author answereth, "That three of these
 "Proofs belong onely to infants, and the other two to adult Persons regu-
 "larly admitted into Church-membership: which therefore do not concern
 "the Parents in question: which two he saith are, 1. That they are
 "personally under Discipline, and liable to Church-censures in their own
 "persons. 2. That when they commit iniquity, they personally break
 "the Covenant.

Ans. Let us then consider the Particulars. For the first, that they are personally Holy, according to 1 Cor. 7. 14. though this be meant, as the Reverend Author saith, that they are thus Holy federally and relatively, yet it is, as he acknowledgeth, in their own persons; and if so, doth it not then follow, that they are Church-members in their own persons? Can persons be truly called Holy, as in the Text al-

ledged, or an *Holy seed*, as *Ezra 9.* and yet not be Members of the visible Church? whether this holiness be *inherent*, or only *federal* and *relative*, yet sith they are thus Holy in their own persons, we conceive they must therefore be granted to be Church-members in their own persons. And though they first received this holiness in their minority, yet for ought we see their persons are still partakers of it, until in some way of God they be cut off from the same: which the Parents in question have not been, but being qualified as the Proposition expresseth, are far from deserving any such matter.

For the Second, *That they are Baptized in their own Persons*; though this be, as the Reverend Author saith, "*By and for their Parents Covenanting for them, they being incapable of Covenanting for themselves*"; yet this being regularly done, how can it be avoided, but, as the Synod saith, *It is a divine Testimony that they are in their own persons Members of the Church.* For, we conceive, the Lord hath not appointed Baptism, the Seal of Membership, to be applied to such as are not Members: And to say, *They are not Members in their own persons, but in their Parents*, would infer, That they should not have been baptized in their own persons, but in their Parents, their Parents receiving Baptism for them; which the Reverend Author, we are perswaded, is far from affirming. And therefore they being regularly baptized in their own persons, how can it be avoided but that they are *Church-members in their own persons*, until they be regularly cut off from the same?

For that other Particular, *That by means of the Covenant they are personally in a visible state of Salvation*; The Reverend Author saith nothing hereto, but only repeats it with this addition or explanation, "*While nothing appears to the contrary*"; which clause may be added, and yet the purpose of the Synod in this Particular not at all hindered thereby. For if the persons spoken of be in their own persons in a visible state of Salvation, *while nothing appears to the contrary*; doth it not then follow, that so long they are visible Church-Members in their own persons: will any body say that they are saved in their Parents, and not in their own persons? The Synod conceived that none would so say: and that therefore it could not be said, that they are not Members in their own persons but in their Parents:

Parents: whereto the Reverend Author saith nothing. As for that Clause, "*While nothing appears to the contrary*", let the terms of the Proposition be considered, and we conceive it cannot rationally and charitably be denied, but that the persons spoken of, as they were in a state of Salvation when *Infants*, so they are *so still* for ought appears to the contrary. For the contrary cannot be evinced and evidenced against them, either by Ignorance, or Scandal, or forsaking the Covenant, or any such thing, they being such as *understand the Doctrine of Faith, and publicly assent thereto, nor Scandalous in life, but commendably further qualified*, as is there expressed; so that for ought that appears to the contrary, they are in a visible state of Salvation, and consequently they are personally Church-members, and so herein the purpose of the Synod is gained.

For the other two Particulars, which the Reverend Author saith, "*Do belong to adult persons regularly admitted into Church-membership, and so do not concern the Parents in question*"; the one is, *That they are personally under Discipline, and liable to Church-censures in their own persons*. For Answer to this, he refers to his Examination of *Propos. 3.* and we refer the Reader to our defence of that Proposition against what he there said.

The other Particular, which is the last here mentioned, viz. *That when they commit Iniquity, they personally break the Covenant*; his answer to it is, "*That this is not proved concerning Infants, nor can be.*"

Ans. Suppose it cannot, yet if that be proved for which the Synod brings it, why may not that suffice, though this other be not proved, to which the Reverend Author applies it? Plain it is, that the Synod neither spake nor meant this of *Infants*, but of such as are *now Parents*, and therefore past their Infancy: and therefore if these Parents, when they commit iniquity, do break the covenant, then the purpose of the Synod is gained, though such a thing could not be affirmed of Infants. But if proofs for this or that may not be accepted, because they are not sufficient for confirming some other things whereto they were neither alledged nor intended, let the judicious and impartial Reader consider whether this be equal and fair, and whether Arguments in such a way be sufficiently answered.

For the Particular in hand the Synod argueth, *That the Parents in question are personally in the covenant, because when they commit iniquity, they personally break the covenant; alledging for this, Jer.*

11. 2, 10. Ezek. 16. where breaking of covenant is expressly charged upon the persons there spoken of. Now doth not this prove the thing intended? sure, if their committing iniquity be breaking of covenant, either such persons were in the covenant, or else we must say a man may be guilty of breach of covenant, when he was not in it. And that the committing iniquity by the persons spoken of, is a breaking of Covenant, the Reverend Author doth more then once acknowledge and testify, *pag. 23, 28, 33, 43, 45.* It were too long to transcribe all the words that are to this purpose in the Pages quoted, but, in sum, there is thus much there affirmed and taught, "*That the covenant in which Children are comprehended in their minority, leaves them under engagement to duty and obedience, when they become adult, which if they do not accordingly perform, they are then transgressors of the Covenant, and breakers of it.*" Now if they be breakers of it, is it not thereby clear that they are comprehended in it? and so what is here said by the Synod stands good.

Thus of the first Particular, *That the Parents in question are personal Members.*

The second is, *That they are immediate Members, as to the Essence of Membership, (i. e. that they themselves in their own persons are the immediate Subjects of this Adjunct of Church-membership) though they come to it by means of their Parents covenanting. For Proof whereof, one thing alledged by the Synod, is that Joshe. 22. 25, 27. where the children are said to have a part in the Lord, (to which Church-membership is equivalent) as well as the Parents; and nothing coming between this Subject (The Children) so as to sever it from the Adjunct (A part in the Lord) therefore they conclude, That the children are immediate Subjects of Church-membership, or immediate Members.*

Now what saith the Reverend Author unto this? why, that which he saith, is, "*That though nothing come between to sever that Adjunct from the Subject, yet something comes between to bring that Subject and Adjunct together, viz. The Parents covenanting for the child: which*"

"which if it did not come between, they would be severed, as they are in
 "other children.

Ans. But what is there in this to overthrow the Synods Assertion? Do not they expressly grant, in terms as plain as can be spoken, and that more then once, *That the children come to this Admittall of Church-membership by means of their Parents covenanting?* See their words in their pag. 23. and therefore this can be no removing of what they have said, being nothing but the very same with that which they have said before. The question is not about *the way or means* of childrens Membership, for it is freely yielded that in this respect it is *Mediate*; that is, they come unto it by means of the Parents covenanting; but the question is about the *Essence, Nature or Kind* of their Membership: whether in this respect it be not the same with the Parents, and they as well as the Parents the *immediate Subjects* of it; and the granting of the *former*, is no deniall of *this other*. If a Parent have room or place in such or such an house, and his childe be there also, though he come thither in the Parents arms, yet may it not be said that this childe hath a place and being in the house, as truly and as properly as the Parent, although he came unto it by the Parents means? Even so it is in the case in hand; the childe comes to be in Covenant, and so in the Church, by the Parents covenanting, yet now he is in the Church, and in the Covenant, and hath a room and place therein, as truly and as properly as the Parent.

Again, the Synod having said, *That their visible ingrafting into Christ the Head, and so into the Church his Body, is sealed in Baptism: and that in ingrafting, nothing comes between the graft and the stock; their union is immediate.*

The Reverend Author answereth, "*That yet it will not follow that they are immediate Members of the visible Church.*"

Ans. And why will not this follow? If their union with the Church be *ingrafting*, and that in ingrafting, *nothing comes between the graft and the stock*, doth it not then follow, that their union with the Church is *immediate*, and they immediate Members of it?

For, as for that which is here said, "*That this union is not properly, but metaphorically called ingrafting, because there is some similitude*"

"*inde here, but Similitudes do run on four feet : it sufficeth that they agree in the main point.*

Ans. But how do they agree therein, if for all this ingrafting there be something *between* the stock and them? Is it not a *main point* in ingrafting, that the union between the branch and the stock be immediate, and that nothing lye between them? Who knoweth not that if it be not so, but that some stock or stone, or something else be between them, so that their union be not immediate; who knoweth not that in such case the ingrafting is spoiled, and the benefit of the branch interrupted, because its union with the stock is not immediate? If then the union of Members with the Church be ingrafting, how can it be avoided but it must be immediate, and so they be immediate Members?

As for that which is here subjoyned, "*That infants and children in minority do partake of Baptism and other Priviledges, by means of their Parents covenanting for them; but adult persons by their personal covenanting for themselves and their seed.*" This is nothing to the *Essence* of their Membership, but only speaks to the way and means how they come to it, which is not the thing in question: for it may be granted, That children come to be Members by their Parents covenanting for them, and the Parents by their own covenanting, and yet their Membership, notwithstanding this different way of attaining it, may be one and the same for *Essence* and *Kind*, and both have immediate conjunction with the Church.

For that where the Synod saith, "*That in Deut. 29. 11. the children were personally and immediately part of the People of God, or Members of the Church of Israel, as well as the Parents.*"

The Answer of the Reverend Author is, "*That the Text doth not prove it.*"

Ans. And yet the words are exprels and plain, that *they did all stand before the Lord, to enter into covenant with him, that he might establish them a people to himself;* and the persons of whom this is said, are not only the men of Israel, but also their wives, and their little ones: So that if the men of Israel, and their wives, were personally and immediately Members of that Church, their little ones, for ought that appears, were so also: for they are all alike spoken of without difference.

Whereas,

Whereas the Synod said, *That to be in Covenant, or to be a Covenantee, is the formalis ratio of a Church-member; and the children being in the Covenant, are therefore the immediate Subjects of the formalis ratio of Membership, and so immediate Members.*

The Answer of the Reverend Author is, "*That though to be in Covenant be the formalis ratio of a Church-member, yet it will not follow, that every Covenantee doth immediately covenant for himself, nor that every Member of the Church is an immediate Member,*" pag. 39.

Ans. For the one of these, viz. of Covenanting immediately for themselves, the Synod never said nor meant that little children did so covenant, nor inferred any such thing from their being in covenant, and so being partakers of the *formalis ratio* of Church-membership; but a little afore, and also in this very place do acknowledge, that one may come to be in covenant one way, and another in another: and therefore though children do not covenant immediately for themselves, yet what the Synod inferreth from their being partakers of the *formalis ratio* of Church-membership, is not at all infringed by this Branch of the Reply.

But for the other, of being *Immediate Members*, why doth not this follow from their being partakers of the Covenant, the *formalis ratio* of Membership? Can one be partaker of the *Form*, or *formalis ratio* of this or that, and yet not be immediately partaker of the *Effect*, or thing formed, but something must first intervene and come between? If the reasonable Soul, and its conjunction with the Body, be the *formalis ratio* of a man; can there be this, and yet no man immediately, but something more must come between to make a man? we suppose it cannot be denied but here is a man immediately, as being partaker of the *formalis ratio* of a man. And even so it may be said in the present case, That children being partakers of the Covenant, the *formalis ratio* of Church-members, they are therefore immediate Members.

The Synod having said, *That to act in covenant, is but the instrumentall means of Membership, and yet children are not without this neither: for the act of the Parent (their publick person) is accounted theirs—*

The Reverend Author answereth, "That the Parents acting in covenanting for their infant-seed, hath been before proved to be the procreant cause of the childes Membership, pag 39.

Ans. It was indeed before said, viz. pag 37. that "He looked at believing confederating Parents, not as the instrumentall, but as the procreant cause; as of the childes Being, by his generating of him, so also of his Church-membership, by his confederating for him. This was said indeed in the Page mentioned, but that it was so proved, we cannot say; if this word [Procreating] be taken as it is expressed, not onely as contradict. to the instrumentall cause, but as a deniall thereof, for so his expression runs. viz. "Not as the instrumentall, but as the procreant cause, &c. Now that it hath been proved, that the Parents act in covenanting is not the instrumentall cause, but the procreant of the childes Membership, this indeed hath been said once and again. but we do not see it proved at all. And indeed how can it? for this procreant cause, sith it is not an instrumentall, must then be the principall cause: and is this proved, That the Parents act in covenanting is not the instrumentall, but the principall cause of the childes Membership? what shall then become of Gods institution in this matter? If the Parents act herein be such a procreant cause as is not instrumentall, then it must be the principall; and then what place is there left for Gods institution? and how doth the Reverend Author agree with himself, who saith, *This is the procreant cause*, and that by Gods Institution, and yet is not the cause instrumentall? if the Parents act be the cause of the childes membership by Gods institution, how can it be avoided but it must be instrumentall, as the Synod said: but if it be so procreant, as not to be instrumentall, how then can it be by Gods Institution, as he saith it is. These things need reconciling. For our parts, we see no reason to the contrary, but that that of Logicians is right, who place the procreant cause under the head of the efficient, and this act of the Parents that is here spoken of, being not the principall efficient of the childes membership, must needs be the instrumentall, as the Synod hath said; and therefore such a procreant as is not instrumentall, nor yet principall, we confess we know not where to place it.

Besides, when the Reverend Author in pag. 37. makes this
Covenant

"Covenant-all is the Parent to be the procreant cause of the child's membership, even as the Parent is the cause of the child's being, by his generating of him; doth not this plainly infer that which yet he denieth, that such a Parent is the instrumental cause of the child's membership? For, is any Parent such a procreant cause of his child's Being by generation, as not to be instrumental under God therein? how then are children said to be by the gift and blessing of God, *Psa. 127. 3. Gen. 29. 31. & 30. 22. & 33. 5.* and the want of children even in married persons to be by Gods restraining hand, and shutting up the Womb? *Gen. 16. 2. & 20. 18. & 30. 2.* doth not this plainly shew, that Parents are but Instrumental under God in the begetting of Children? and therefore if the Parent be the cause of the child's membership in like sort, as of the child's natural Being by his generating of him, then it must be granted, that in this of his Church-membership, he is no otherwise a procreant cause of it, but as instrumental; for in that of the child's natural being it is certainly so: and that of membership being, as the Reverend Author saith, like unto this other, therefore in this of the child's membership it is so also. Moreover, it is well hold, that the Parent is such a procreant cause of the child's membership by considering for him, as he is of the child's natural Being, by generating him; then look as the child which the Parent generates, is personally, immediately formally and actually a man (or one of mankind) as well as the Parent; so by the membership which the Parents considering procreates for him, he is a personal, immediate, formal and actual Church-member.

The Synod, to shew that Children are actual, complete, and immediate members, asketh, what do they want hereunto? Is it covenant-interest, which is the formalis ratio of membership? No, they are in covenant. Is it divine grant, and institution, which is the principal efficient? No, God hath clearly declared that he grants them a portion in his Church, and appoints them to be Members thereof. Is it an act of covenanting, which is the instrumental means? No, they have this also reputatively by divine appointment, making the Parent a publick person, and accounting them to covenant in his covenanting. The sum is, they want nothing that is requisite to complete and immediate membership.

Now what saith the Reverend Author to this ? That which he saith, is this, "*That all that is here expressed, doth not supply what is wanting to invest little children with such membership. For, though they are in covenant, which is the formalis ratio of their membership, yet it is mediantem parentum foedere, and so their membership is mediate.*"

Ans. But this speaks nothing to the nature and kind of their membership, but onely to the way and means of attaining it, which may be different from that of adult persons, and yet the thing be the same. If the chief Captain obtain by a great sum to be a freeman of Rome, and Paul be free born, *Act. 22. 28.* yet Pauls freedom is either better then the other, or at least no worse; and so it may be said of the Church-membership of little children.

"*There is wanting unto children in minority to make them such members, a personal fitness to act in covenant for themselves.*"

Ans. But this is nothing to the nature of their membership, but onely speaks of the way of attaining it by their own act. But shall we say that Paul wanted something to make him a free Roman, because he had no personal fitness nor ability to procure that freedom to himself by his own act, but onely was so born? or shall we say that David and others mentioned in *Psal. 22. 10. Isai. 46. 4.* wanted something of compleat, proper and immediate interest in God, because they had their interest from their mothers womb, and did not attain it by their own personal act? for our parts we dare not so say, and by like reason dare not deny, but that the interest of little children in the visible Church, may be proper, compleat and immediate, though they have not come to it by their own act, but have had it from their minority or birth. For, to have God for their God is as great a blessing, as to be an actual and immediate member of the visible Church; and yet we see want of personall fitness to act for themselves, did not hinder from the one, and why then should it hinder from the other?

Synod. A different manner and means of conveying the covenant to us, or of making us members, doth not make a different sort of members; we are as truly, personally and immediately members of the body of fallen mankind, and by nature heirs of the condemnation pertaining

pertaining thereto, as Adam was, though he came to be so by his own personal act, and we by the act of our publick person, Pag. 24. 25.

The Reverend Author in his Answer hereto grants, "That in the case of Adam it is so, as is said; but, saith he, this doth not suit the case of Infants in question. For, 1. Adam stood as a publick person for all mankind; no Parent is so for all his posterity, but for his infants and children in minority. 2. Adams covenant was onely with the Lord, and not with any Church, as the covenant of confederate Parents is. 3. The Parents breaking the covenant doth not make his children heirs of condemnation, as Adams did all mankind, pag. 40. 41.

For Answer whereto, we may remember what himself did formerly express, that *Similitudes do not run on four feet; if they agree in the main point that may suffice, though in other things they differ.* If therefore there were these three differences, and as many more, between the cases alledged, yet where is there any difference in the main point? Are not we as truly, personally, and immediately Members of the Body of fallen Mankind, as Adam was? This the Reverend Author doth not deny, but in plain words doth grant it: And is not then the purpose of the Synod, in alledging this instance, clearly gained? Doth it not plainly appear thereby, that a *different way and means* of being in Covenant, doth not make a *different sort* of Membership? Adam was a Member of fallen Mankind, and so are we, though he came to be so by his own personal act, and we by him, or by his act for us: which doth clearly shew what the Synod saith, That a different way and means of being Members, doth not alter the nature and kinde of Membership; which we see doth hold as touching being a Member of fallen Mankind, and we see no reason but it may also hold as touching being a Member of a visible Church.

"There is not any to be accounted a publick person, as Adam was, but onely Jesus Christ for all that are in him, Rom. 5. 14, to 20. pag. 41.

Ans. Yet it is evident, though Jesus Christ was a Publick Person for all that are in him, as Adam was, yet in the number of persons there is difference; Adam standing for all mankind, and Christ stand-

ing onely for his Redeemed, the Elect. Now if Christ may be truly called a *Publick Person* for all his, as Adam was, though Adam was for them that were farre more in number; why may not then a confederating Parent be counted a *Publick Person* for his children, though they be farre less in number then the other? But herein the cases seem parallel; Adam for all in him, Christ Jesus for all in him, and the confederating Parent for all in him. We see not how this can justly be denied by the Reverend Author, si. h he calls these Parents "*Undertakers* for their children, pag. 40. And again, pag. 41. "*And such undertakers, that the children are bound by their Parents acting to perform that Covenant, when they shall become capable: which seems to us to be the same, or as much as is meant, when they are called Publick persons for their children.*"

Another Similitude used by the Synod to illustrate the thing in question, is, from *A Prince giving Lands to a man and his heirs successively while they continue loyall; in which case the following heir is a true and immediate Owner of that Land, and may be personally disinherited, if a sloyall, as well as his father before him.*

To this the Answer is, "*That this Similitude doth not suit the case in question; for, as for infants, they cannot be visibly disloyall, and adult persons not regularly joyued to the Church, have cut off the entail of the Covenant from themselves and their posterity by their personall disloyalty.*"

Ans. But for all this, the Similitude may suit the case in question, though the Reverend Author say it doth not. For, as the following heir is an immediate Owner of that Land, till for disloyalty he be disinherited; so the following children are immediate Church-members, till some of them for their sin be cut off from their Membership. Is not here plain suitableness in the Similitude? we conceive it is apparent and manifest. For, if infants cannot be disloyal, and if adult persons be cut off for disloyalty, is it not manifest, that both are immediate owners till they be cut off? which is the thing the Synod affirms. Concerning infants, it seems they are such true and immediate owners of Church-membership, as that they cannot be cut off therefrom, because they cannot be so disloyal as to deserve such a thing: and for the adult persons, if the entaile of the covenant be

be cut off from them and their posterity by their *personal disloyalty*; doth not this clearly shew, that they were truly and immediately in the Covenant, till their disloyalty cut them off? And so the Similitude stands suitable and good for the purpose for which the Synod brings it.

But as for this "*cutting off the entail of the Covenant*", which is here spoken of; we must confess we do not see how such a thing can justly be charged upon the persons spoken of in this Proposition: For, they *understand the Doctrine of Faith*, and give their *Assent* thereto; they are not *scandalous* in life, they *solemnly own the Covenant*, and therein give up themselves and their children to the Lord: and is this such *disloyalty*, as to be a *cutting off the Covenant and entail of it*? we think it were hard to prove such a thing, and do fear that Charity will not allow to affirm it. Nor that which is here said in this pag. 41. "*That nothing is given to them and theirs by the Covenant, which they presume to usurp without warrant from God*. For,

1. By the Covenant God gives himself to be a God to his People, and to their seed in their generations, Gen. 17. and shall we say this is nothing? God is Almighty, and All-sufficient, and is it nothing to have such a God to be a God to us, and to our seed?

2. And when the persons in question are such as were Regularly in Covenant in their infancy, by means of their Parents covenanting for them, as the Reverend Author doth acknowledge, how can their owning this Covenant, when they become adult, be justly counted a presuming to usurp the Covenant without warrant from God? We read of them that are blamed, and that justly, for forsaking the Covenant which God made with their fathers, Deut. 29. 25. Judg. 2. 20. but that owning this Covenant should be a forsaking of it, and an usurping of it without warrant from God, and a presuming. we do not see how this can be proved. To some indeed the Lord saith, *Wouldest thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth?* Psal. 50. 16. but doth the Lord say this to such as were qualified as in this fifth Proposition? The contrary is most clear: for these in this Psal. 50. are expressly called *Wicked*, such as did hate to be instructed and reformed, were culpable for consenting with Thieves, partaking with Adulterers, slandering, and all evil speaking, &c. whereas the persons

sons in question are not culpable for any such thing, being expressly said to be *Not scandalous in life*; but on the contrary furnished with many good and commendable qualifications, and were regularly admitted into the Covenant in their minority: and therefore being so unlike the persons that are blamed for taking God's Covenant into their mouth, we see no ground to say they have got off the entail of the Covenant by their *disloyalty*, and that nothing is given to them and theirs by it, but that they presume to usurp it without warrant from God: we see no warrant from God so to say or think of such persons.

A Member (saith the Synod) is one that according to Rule, or Divine Institution, is within the visible Church.

"They say true, saith the Reverend Author: but that refuses nothing that I have said concerning Mediate and Immediate Members, for both are within the Church, though both have not full communion with the Church in all Ordinances.

Ans. The Synod never said, that all that are within the Church have such full communion, and therefore this is nothing against them: but if all Members be within the Church according to Divine Institution, how can it be avoided but they are all immediate Members of the Church? For, if they be all within the Church, then there is nothing as a Medium between the Church and them, or any of them, and so they are all immediate Members, as the Synod saith. Whether all have full communion, is one thing, and whether all be immediate Members, is another; and the denying of the former, is no infringing of the latter.

The Synod having mentioned an Objection, That if children be compleat and immediate Members as their Parents, they shall then immediately have all Church-priviledges as their Parents have: And making this Answer, That it followeth not; all priviledges that belong to Members as such, do belong to the children as well as the Parents: but all priviledges do not so. A Member as such (or all Member) may not partake of all priviledges, but they are to make progress both in memberly duties and priviledges, as their age, capacity, and qualifications do fit them for the same.

To this the Reverend Author answereth, *"That their Answer to the Objection*

"Objection is insufficient; for the best Members have need to make progress in memberly duties and qualifications, yet all have that communion that suits their membership: Infants in Baptism, &c. and adult persons in the Seats, Voting, &c. pag. 41, 42.

Ans. By this it seems the difference lies here, that whereas some Church-members have communion in all Church-priviledges, and others not in all, but onely in some; the Synod apprehends the reason of this difference to be, because some are yet defective in qualifications, and fitness for such full communion, though not wanting compleat and immediate Membership: But the Reverend Author makes the reason of the difference to be from the different kinde of Membership, the one sort being onely *Mediate Members*, and the other *Immediate*. All have that communion for which they are qualified, saith the Synod: "All have that communion which suits their Membership, saith the Reverend Author. For clearing of which Point, it may not be amiss to consider of other Societies, and how it is in them; as that of the *Family*, and of the *Civil State*: in both which it is clear, that all have not like communion in Priviledges; but who can say that this ariseth from their different Membership in the Societies of which they are? or how can it be denied, but that this ariseth from their different qualifications? An Infant, an Idiot, one Distracted, or Distempered with Frenzy, &c. such cannot enjoy all priviledges in the *Family*, or *Civil State*, as others may; and the reason is, Because they are not fully qualified: but who can say they are not compleat, and proper, and immediate Members of the *Family* or *State*, as well as others? He that doth injury to such an one, doth injury to one that is as truly and properly a member of the Society, as those that are better qualified; and such injuries are punishable with Death, or otherwise, as the nature of the offence doth require, as being injuries to one that is truly and properly a personal and immediate Subject and Member of the Common-wealth, though there might be many other Subjects better qualified? In like sort in Church-society, some may enjoy more full communion than others, and yet not as being more truly partakers of proper personal, and immediate Membership, but because they are better qualified.

Thus of the second Particular, *That the Parents in question are Immediate Members.*

The third is, *That their Membership still continues in adult age, and ceaseth not with their infancy; 1. Because in Scripture persons are broken off only for notorious sin, or incorrigible impenitency and unbelief, not for growing up to adult age, Rom. 11. 20.*

The Reverend Author answereth, "*That this Reason doth not prove, that the membership of all baptized in infancy continues in adult age.*"

Ans. Nor did the Synod so say, nor produce that Reason and Scripture for such purpose; but their purpose therein was this, *viz.* To prove that the Parents in question do still continue members: which may be true, though all that are baptized in infancy do not. For thus their Argument lies: If persons be not broken off but for notorious sin, or incorrigible impenitency and unbelief; then the Parents in question are not broken off, but do still continue members: for any such notorious sin, &c. cannot justly be charged upon them, witness the terms of the Proposition. To this purpose is this Reason alledged by the Synod; and therefore though the membership of all baptized in infancy do not continue in adult age, the Synod loseth nothing thereby, as having never affirmed any such thing.

But why doth not this Reason and Text prove the thing intended by the Synod? The Reverend Author gives this Reason; "*because that Text Rom. 11. 20. speaketh only of such as have been received into membership by their personal faith, and covenanting with the Church visibly.*"

A. The text clearly speaks of the people or nation of the Jews, of whom it is said, that they were a disobedient and gainsaying people, Rom. 10. 21. that they, as concerning the Gospel, were enemies, Rom. 11. 28. that they killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets, and persecuted the Apostles, pleased not God, and were contrary to all men, &c. 1 Thess. 2. 15, 16. and shall we say, that notwithstanding all this, they were received into compleat and immediate membership by their personal faith, &c. Besides, it is not very credible, that all the members of the Jewish Church were received into compleat and immediate membership,

membership by their personal faith, if that be true which the Reverend Author said, pag. 6. that "That Church was to be propagated and continued by natural generation in a lineal descent from Abraham, by Isaac and Jacob, till the coming of Christ; and that there was no Ordinance for casting out their members for sins against the Moral Law, as there is under the Gospel, pag. 12. Which things (if true) do import, that visible faith was not the thing looked for in receiving the members of that Church, nor in continuing of them, but their natural generation, and lineal descent, might suffice: How then can that stand which is here said, that the persons spoken of in R. m. 11. 20. were such as were received into membership by their personal faith, whereas that Text speaks of the members of the Church of the Jews, who (if the Reverend Authors apprehension be right) were not to receive, but "by lineal succession, by natural generation; Christian Churches differing from that Church, and being of another sort, as being to be propagated and continued by regeneration, made visible by a "right Confession, and Profession of Faith, pag. 6. The sum is this, in the one place he makes it peculiar to Christian Churches to be propagated by regeneration, and faith visibly professed; and that in the Church of the Jews it was otherwise: and in the other place, which certainly speaks of the Church of the Jews, he saith it speaks of members received by their personal faith: wherein there seems to be a repugnancy.

"Our question is of adult persons that break off themselves from the covenant by prophane neglect or contempt of the Ordinances, or unsuitable conversation, pag. 43.

Ans. Then the Parents in question are not broken off at all, but their membership still continues, as the Synod saith; for the terms of the Proposition will not suffer such prophaneness and contempt of Ordinances, and bad conversation, to be justly charged upon them; and if there be the causes for which men are broken off, is not then this reason of the Synod plainly confirmed and made good? for they argue, that the persons in question do still continue members, because not broken off for notorious sin, impenitency, incorrigibility, and the like; and here it is said, that men are broken off by prophane acts, contempt of the Ordinances, and unsuitable conversation; which sayings are in effect, the

the same, or little different, and both of them do witness that the persons spoken of are not broken off, as not being guilty of any such wickedness or misdemeanours.

“Who ever said that any were broken off for growing up to adult age?”

Ans. If the persons described in the Proposition be said to be broken off, what is this less than the thing that is so disowned? It cannot be denied but they were once within the Church, and it cannot be said that they are broken off for any Scandal in their conversation; but coming up to the terms in the Proposition are far from such evil, and on the contrary are furnished with many good and commendable qualifications, as Knowledge, Profession, Susception to Christs Government, owning the Covenant, and the like. Now if notwithstanding all this, they be declared to be no Members of the Church, but broken off from it, though they were once in it; what is this less than to say, *they are broken off by growing up to adult age?* And see Reply of the Reverend Author to this Argument, p. 42.

2. Saith the Synod, *The Jews Children circumcised did not cease to be Members by growing up, but continued in the Church, and were by vertue of their membership received in Infancy, bound unto various duties, and in special to those solemn personal professions that pertained to adult Members, not as then entering into a new membership, but as making a progress in memberly duties, Deut. 26. 2---10. & 16. 16, 17. Gal. 5. 3.*

To this the Answer is, “1. That the Jewes children circumcised were bound to various duties, and to those solemn professions mentioned, is clear enough by the Texts alledged, and sundry other: wherunto I willingly add, that Baptisme also bindeth the infant-seed of considerates to various Gospel-duties, and especially this of using all means, &c.

Ans. And do not both these shew that which the Synod expresseth, That children do not cease to be Members by growing up, but do still continue in the Church? for, if it was so with the Jews children, is it not also so with ours, according to the Synods arguing? and if by vertue of that membership received in infancy, the circumcised then die, and the Baptized now do stand bound to various duties when adult, how can it be avoided, but that membership received in infancy then did, and

now doth continue in adult age? for, when &c as long as one stands bound by a covenant, then and so long that covenant must needs remain in being, for otherwise how could one stand bound by it? can one be bound by that which is not in being? one would think this were not possible. Therefore by this being bound by the covenant and membership received in infancy, to various duties when adult, it appeareth, that the covenant and membership received in infancy doth still continue in adult age, and so the purpose of the Synod is gained.

But 2. saith the Reverend Author, "*It is not proved by those texts, that when they were adult they did not enter into a new membership; rather the contrary appears by Deut. 26. 17, 18.*"

Ans. If so, then they did every third Year enter into a new membership: for the Reverend Author conceives that what is said to be done in Deut. 26. 17, 18. was done every third Year, as before p. 31. but who knows not that the same persons or people may many a time enter into covenant, or renew their covenant with God, and yet not thereby enter into so many new memberships? It seems by Psal. 50. 5. where it is said, *They have made a covenant with me by sacrifice*, that so oft as sacrifice was offered, so oft there was a covenant made between God and them; and yet it will not follow, that at every time of sacrificing there was an entering into a new membership: it may suffice to say, as the Synod doth, that at all such times there was a progress in memberly duties.

But why should we think that the Covenant in Deut. 26. was entering into a new Membership? The Reason rendred, is this; "*Because they entered into the Covenant personally and immediately, not in and by their Parents, as they did in infancy, Gen. 17. 7. And if Covenanting be the Form of Church-membership, then a different Form of Covenanting, makes a different kinde of Membership; Mediate and Immediate Covenanting, makes Mediate and Immediate Members.*"

Ans. But is this certain, that a different way of covenanting, makes a different kinde of membership? In Gen. 15. there is covenanting by dividing the kisse, the goat, &c. in the midst, and passing between the pieces or parts; and so in Jer. 34. In Gen. 17. there is covenanting by

silence,

silence, and falling upon the face; in Nehem. 9. 38. there is covenanting by Writing and Sealing of it; in 2 Chron. 15. by swearing with a loud voice, and by engaging, that a husband should not do as is there promised, should be put to death. Here we see are various ways of covenanting; but shall we say that these do infer divers kinds of membership? then it would follow, that if the same persons or people should divers times enter into Covenant, or renew their Covenant, and this sometimes in one of these ways, and sometimes in another, if a *different form* of covenanting do make a *different kind* of membership, it would follow, that the same persons and people might many-times over, again and again enter into a *new kind* of membership; which we suppose none will affirm, and therefore this that is here said will not hold: the thing for essence and kind may be the same, when the way and manner of doing may be various. Moreover, covenanting taken for *our act* in making or renewing the covenant, is not the form of membership (this is but the instrumental efficient) but covenant-interest, or to be in covenant, is the *formalis ratio* of membership (that is it which the Synod affirms pag. 24.) and that is the immediate, actual, and proper portion of the children, as well as of the Parents.

The third Argument of the Synod, is, *From the Relation of born Servants and Subjects, by which the Scripture sets forth the state of children in the Church, Levit. 25. 41, 42. Ezek. 37. 25. which relations (as all men know) do not cease with infancy, but do continue in adult age: and hence it also follows, that one special end of membership received in infancy, is to leave persons under engagement to service and subjection to Christ in his Church when grown up, &c. pag. 25. 26.*

The Answer to this, is, "That the one of these Texts is typical, *figuring the time of grace, whereby now Christ hath freed us from the servitude of Sin and Satan, &c. the other Text is a Prophecy of the calling of the Elect nation of the Jews, and of the state of the Church under the New Jerusalem: and therefore these do neither of them suit the thing in question.*

Auf. But for the present nothing appears to the contrary, but they

they may be suitable; yet, if the thing it self for which those Texts are alledged, be sound and good, the Inference which the Synod makes is so also, though the Texts were not so apt. For, if the children in the Church be in state as *born Servants and Subjects to Christ*, then this state and relation, and so their membership, doth not cease with infancy, but continues in adult age. And we hope the Reverend Author will not deny, but for state they are as *born Servants, and Subjects to Christ*, though he thinks the Texts quoted are not apt Proofs for it; but if the thing be not denied, the Argument of the Synod stands good for the continuance of their membership. Grant them to be in the state of *born Servants and Subjects* in their infancy, and then it must be granted, that this state continueth when they are adult, and so their membership doth not cease with their infancy: deny that their membership continueth when adult, and then it must be said, either that their state in infancy is not as *born Servants and Subjects*, or that such relations do cease with infancy. But for the Reverend Author, he expressly grants, "*That one special end of membership received in infancy, is to leave persons under engagement to service and subjection to Christ in his Church when grown up, when they are fittest for it, and have most need of it, pag 43.*" which is the very same that is here affirmed by the Synod: and doth not that hence follow which the Synod inferreth, That therefore their membership did not cease with infancy, but doth still continue? It seems to follow unavoidably: for how can they when adult, or grown up, be under engagement to service and subjection, as the end of membership received in infancy, if that membership do not still continue, but together with their infancy be now past and gone? If they be still under engagement, then their Covenant doth still continue, and consequently their Membership.

"Yet, when all this is done, neither can the Parents nor the Church give grace unto the children, that when they become adult they may be spiritually fit for personal and immediate membership: and to bring them into it without such fitness visibly, is to prophane the Ordinances, and to pollute the Lords Sanctuary, pag 44.

Ans. It is true, none can give grace but God, who is the God of all grace: but for bringing the adult persons spoken of into membership,

we conceive there is no such thing here intended by the Synod, nor can be spoken of in any propriety of speech concerning the persons in question; they being such as were *Members from their infancy*, and are accounted by the Synod *still to continue members now when adult*, and therefore there is no bringing of them into membership. That which is here spoken of, were more aptly called an *acknowledging of them to be members*: and how the acknowledging of such persons, as the Proposition describes, to be and continue members, can be judged a *prophanation of the Ordinances, or a polluting of the Lords Sanctuary*, we confess we do not understand: for we know they were brought into membership by Gods own Institution and Appointment, and we do not know that they have in any way of God been put from it; nor, considering the term in the Proposition, can be justly judged to deserve any such matter, but the contrary: and therefore the *acknowledging of them to be members*, can be no such *prophaning and polluting*, as is spoken of.

The fourth Argument of the Synod, to shew that the persons spoken of do *still continue members*, is this: *Because there is no ordinary way of cessation of membership, but by Death, Dismission, Excommunication, or Dissolution of the Society; none of which is the case of the persons in question.*

Whereto the Reverend Author answereth, "*That the enumeration is insufficient; there is another ordinary way, i.e. Desertion. Thus Esau's membership ceased; and so may theirs, who being adult, regard not to joyn with the Church by their personal and immediate confederation, &c. And if forsaking the Church may suffice to deprive those of Church-privileges, who were before in personal and immediate Church-fellowship, 1 Joh. 2. 19. how much more those who never had such membership? &c. What can the mediate membership which such had in infancy, advantage them for continuing in membership, when being adult they live in the breach of that Covenant, whereby they were left under engagement in their infancy unto service and subjection to Christ in the Church?*"

Ans. If the Enumeration were not sufficient, but that that of Desertion were needful to be added, yet this would not avail to prove
the

the contrary to what the Synod here saith, but the membership of the persons in question may still continue for all this: for, being qualified as the Proposition expresseth, they are farre from being guilty of such *Desertion*, or *forsaking of the Church of God*; and therefore it is not *this*, though it were added to the Particulars in the Argument, that can hinder their still continuing to be Members. Nor can they be justly charged as guilty of such things as are here expressed, viz. "*Not regarding to joyn with the Church by their personal and immediate confederation, nor to fit themselves for it, but to despise the Church of God, not desiring nor endeavouring after spiritual fitness, but living in the breach of that Covenant, &c.*" These things we cannot see how they can justly be imputed to the persons qualified as the Proposition expresseth, but they may still continue to be members, as not being culpable of any such things, as these here mentioned, to un-Member them.

Here also it may be observed, how the Reverend Author doth again acknowledge, "*That the sins of adult persons, who were admitted in infancy, are a breach of that Covenant in which they were then comprehended, and which left them under engagement unto service and subjection to Christ in the Church: which sheweth that they are still in the Covenant, though now they be adult; for otherwise, how could their sins be breach of covenant? and if they be still in Covenant, then they still continue members, and their membership did not cease with their infancy, which is the thing here affirmed by the Synod.*"

For that of *Esaï*, whose membership is said to cease by *Desertion* the Reverend Author may remember, that he hath more then once told us of *invalidity of Proofs from the Old Testament for things in Gospel-times*: which Proofs, though we cannot say but they may be *valid*, yet why should himself use them against us, (for this of *Esaï* is from the Old Testament) if his apprehension be right, that *such Proofs are not valid*? But for the thing it self, of the *cessation of membership by a mans own act*, this hath been spoken unto before, pag. 34 35. in *Defence of the first Argument for this fifth Proposition*: Where also was considered that Text *1 Job. 2. 19.* which is here alledged again: To which former place we refer the Reader;

only adding thus much, that the *cessation of membership* which the Synod here speaks of, is such cessation as is *ordinary*, but if *Esaú's* were by his *own act alone*, why may we not say that there was something in it *extraordinary*? Though it is not any where said that it was by his *own act*: if any affirm *that it was*, it stands upon them to prove it, for *affirmantis incumbit probatio*. And though it be not said that the Church had any hand in it, yet negative Arguments in matter of Fact are not cogent, though in matters of Faith they be: but for matter of Fact, we know many things were done that are not written, *Job. 20. 30. & 21. 25.* and therefore though this be not written, that there was any Church-proceedings against *Esaú* for his departing from the Church, and therefore we do not say there was; yet they that say *there was not*, must prove *there was not*, because the meer not mentioning that *there was*, is no sufficient Proof that *there was not*: And for any further Proof, that *Esaú's* falling off from his Church-membership was by his *own act alone*; any further Proof for this, then merely the not expressing of any Church-proceedings against him, we finde none.

The fifth Argument of the Synod for confirming this Particular, That the persons spoken of do still continue Members, is this: *Because otherwise a person admitted a member, and sealed by Baptism, not cast out, nor deserving so to be, may (the Church whereof he was, still remaining) become a Non-member, out of the Church, and of the unclean world; which the Scripture acknowledgeth not.*

Whereto the answer in sum is this, "*That as a Freeman's childe of some Corporation is free-born, and may in his minority trade under his father; yet being grown up, must personally enter into the common Engagement of Freeman, or else may not trade for himself, but is a Non-freeman by his own default, and hath lost his Freedom by not entering in his own person into the common Engagement, &c. So, and much more justly, an adult person makes himself to become a Non-member by not covenanting personally as his father did.*"

Ans. It may be justly questioned, whether this Comparison do suit the case in hand. For, 1. All the priviledge of this Freeman's childe

childe that is mentioned, is this, that he may in his minority trade under his Father; which privilege doth not at all arise from his being the childe of a Freeman; and the reason is, because one that is not a childe, but onely a servant of such a Freeman, may trade under the Freeman, as his Master. This being the privilege of such Freeman, that their Servants, and others belonging to them, though they are not free, yet may trade for them, and in their names: which is upon the matter no privilege at all to the childe or servant, but onely to the Freeman himself under whom they trade. But will any say, that to be a childe of a Church-member is no privilege at all to a childe, but onely to the Father? or will any say, that the childe hath no more privilege then the servant, sith in the case alledged, the servant may trade under the Freeman, as well as the childe may? we suppose none will say this; and therefore in this the Comparison doth not suit the case in hand. The Orders and Privileges of Corporations are various, according to the tenour of their severall Charters; but what the Charter of the Church is, we know, viz. That in *Gen. 17.* it takes in children into the Church with their Parents, and doth not allow them to be put out, till censurable iniquity do appear.

2. If in some Corporations one that is free-born do lose his Privilege when he becomes adult, if he do not then enter personally into the Engagement, yet it is not certain that it is so in all. Sure no such thing is said of *Paul*, who yet pleads his Privilege of being a Freeman of Rome, because he was so born, without mention of any personal act of his own for attaining that Privilege, *Acts 22.* And if *Paul*, being free-born, did retain his Freedome when adult, without any personal act of his own for that end, why may it not be so in respect of Church-membership, though in all Civil Corporations it be not so? It is evident, that the Scripture speaks of the children of bond-servants, as bound also, and of the children of the free, as free also, without mention of any act of the children to procure that relation or state, in the one case or in the other, *Lev. 25. 46, 54.* And we see no reason but it may be so also in the visible Church, that if the Parent be a member, the childe is so also, and so continues, till he be cut off, not losing his membership by the meer not performing of

what might fit him for full Communion.

3. If it were so in all Corporations, that a Freemans childe doth lose his *Freedom* when adult, if he do not then in his own person enter into the *common Engagement*; and if it were also so in the Church, that a Members childe should lose his *Membership* when adult, if he do not then personally Covenant, (though this is more then we see proved) yet if it were so, we see not how this can be prejudicial to the persons spoken of in this fifth Proposition. For of them it is expressly said, *that they do solemnly own the Covenant before the Church, and therein give up themselves and their children to the Lord, &c.* and therefore though *Freedom* in a Corporation, and *Membership* in the Church, might be lost by not entering personally into the *Common Engagement*, and Covenant; yet, except we shall say it may be lost, though this *Personall Engagement* and *Entering* be performed and done, except we shall say this, we cannot say that the membership of the persons in question is lost at all, but doth still continue, sith they are such as do thus personally engage and covenant.

As for that Text, *Rom. 2. 25. If thou be a breaker of the Law, thy Circumcision is made no circumcision*, which is here alledged again: we refer the Reader to what hath been said touching this Text before in pag. 33.

Lastly, whereas the Reverend Author saith, "*Those Texts in Rom. 11. 16. 1 Cor. 7. 14. Gen. 17. 7. are not applicable to the adult persons in question, but onely to infants and children in minority.*"

The Answer is, that the Synod doth not at all apply them to the adult persons in question, and therefore it is a great mistake so to think: but having said, that these persons are personally, immediate, and yet-continuing Members, they do thence infer, that their children are therefore also Members, in covenant, and holy, and consequently are the Subjects of Baptism; which Inference and Consequence the Reverend Author we are perswaded will not deny, if the ground thereof be good, That the Parents in question are Members of the Church, as the Synod apprehends that they are. And therefore although the Texts alledged be not applicable to the adult persons in question, yet if they be applicable to such infants and little chil-

dren whose Parents are *personal, immediate, and yet continuing Members*, they do then sufficiently serve the purpose for which they are here alledged by the Synod.

So much for *Defence* of the sixth and last Argument for confirming this fifth Proposition.

Propos. 6. The sixth Proposition of the Synod, is this, *Such Church-Members who either by death, or some extraordinary Providence, have been inevitably hindered from publick acting as aforesaid, yet having given the Church cause in judgement of charity to look at them as so qualified, and such, as had they been called brethren, would have so acted, their children are to be Baptized.*

To this the Reverend Author Answereth, "*That this Proposition may not be granted, for it granteth the privilege of Church-membership to such as are not actually and regularly Church-members.*"

Ans. And yet the Proposition, in the very first words of it, doth expressly declare, that what Church-priviledge is here mentioned, is not granted to such as are not Church-members, but to such as are: *Such Church-members, saith the Synod, who, &c. their Children are to be Baptized.* So that though Church-priviledges may not be granted to such who are not Church-members, yet to the persons here spoken of, the Baptism of their Children may be granted, without any such undue granting of Church priviledges, sith the Synod doth not say these persons are not Church-members. but doth expressly say they are. All that can be said against these persons, is, that they have not acted according to the fifth Proposition: and yet it is said, they have been inevitably hindered therein, and have given the Church cause in judgement of charity to look at them as willing to have so acted, and therefore having been Church-members from their birth or minority, how can the applying of Baptism to their children, be the granting of a Church-priviledge to such as are not Church-members? If they had not been hindered from acting as in the fifth Proposition, but had indeed so done, yet this is not the thing that would have made them members, they having been members afore; and though they be now adult, yet it hath been proved afore in the fifth Proposition, *Arg. 6. Part. 3. That their membership*
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doth still continue; and therefore the granting of Church-privileges to such as are not Church-members, may be yielded to be unwarrantable, without any prejudice to the persons here spoken of, or to what the Synod here saith concerning them.

And whereas the Reverend Author doth here lay down two Inferences: "1. That an ordinary Minister cannot orderly do an act of Office to such as are not regular and actual Members of the visible Church; but, if he do, it will be usurpation. 2. That the Church may not receive into any privilege of Church-communion, such as are not actually in publick Church-order.

These may both be granted, and yet what the Synod here saith not be at all infringed thereby. For, considering that the persons spoken of were Church-members long ago, and have never since been cut off or cast out from that Relation, nor deserve any such matter, but do still continue therein, as was shewed in the fifth Proposition, therefore we cannot see how it can be any usurpation in the Minister to do acts of his office towards them, nor unlawful in the Church to receive them to such a privilege of Church-communion as is spoken of; nay rather the persons being and still continuing Members, the performance of the thing in question may seem to be so far from being usurpation, as that the neglect thereof may be counted an unwarrantable omission or transgression.

The first Reason of the Synod for confirming this Proposition, is, *Because the main foundation of the right of the child to privilege remains, viz. Gods Institution, and the force of his covenant carrying it to the Generations of such as are keepers of the covenant, i. e. not visibly breakers of it, &c.*

Whereunto the Answer of the Reverend Author is, "That the Parents of the children in question are visibly breakers of the covenant, which was sealed to them by Baptism in their Infancy, which obliged them to covenant personally for themselves and theirs, &c. p. 47, 48.

Ans. But is this certain, that the Parents in question are visibly breakers of the covenant? sure this, if it be affirmed, had need to be soundly cleared. For either they be such as do personally own the covenant, being qualified with knowledge and blameless life, &c. as in the fifth

Fifth Proposition, or else if they have not *so acted*, they have been *inevitably hindred* therein, as is said in the sixth Proposition: and is it reasonable, that for all this they must be counted *visibly breakers of the Covenant*? Are they such *breakers of it*, who do *publicly own it*, and therein give up themselves and their children to the Lord, being not culpable for any contrary practice in their conversation? or are they such *breakers of it*, who if they have not *publicly acted* as aforesaid, the reason hath been, because they have been *inevitably hindred*? we cannot see that Rule or Reason will allow or give warrant for such apprehensions. Put case a person who was born a Church-member, and hath been sound in judgement, and unblameable and commendable in his conversation all his dayes, but hath been, like *Joseph*, sold for a slave, and kept in bondage, suppose to the Turks, or others, for many a year: suppose also that after a time he be restored to his liberty, and thereupon do return homeward with his childe or children born to him in his exile and bondage, intending to present himself and his children to the Lord in the Church where he was born,* but before he reach home, he dieth by the way; this man is *inevitably hindred* from entring into Covenant personally, though willing to have done it, and fit for it: But will any Reason or Charity permit to count this man a *visible breaker of the Covenant*, because he did not personally enter thereinto? we suppose this cannot be said, he being *inevitably hindred* from so acting. Why then should the Parents in question be judged to be *visibly Covenant-breakers* for not entring into Covenant personally, when it is expressly said they have herein been *inevitably hindred*, though willing to have done it, if there had been opportunity? For our parts, we dare not judge them to be *visibly Covenant-breakers*, as not seeing any ground or warrant so to do.

The second Reason of the Synod for confirming this sixth Proposition, is, *Because the Parents not doing what is required in the fifth Proposition, is through want of opportunity, which is not to be imputed as their guilt, so as to be a barre to the chilaes Priviledge.*

Now what saith the Reverend Author unto this? Doth he deny
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that it is *want of opportunity* that hinders the Parents from doing what is required in the fifth Proposition? No. we do not see that he denieth this at all? Doth he then say, that though *want of opportunity* hindred, yet for all this *want of opportunity*, the *not doing*, though through that *want of opportunity*, is nevertheless a barre to the childes Priviledge? Not so neither; we do not finde that he so saith, any more then the former: And therefore what was said in the former Reason about being *inevitably hindred*, may be applied to this particular for *want of opportunity*, viz. That such *not doing* what is mentioned in the fifth Proposition, can be no barre to the childes Priviledge.

But if the Reverend Author saith nothing touching this *want of opportunity*, which is the main thing which is mentioned by the Synod in this their second Reason, what then doth he say in his Answer to this Reason?

That which he first saith, is, "*That it hath been already proved in his Examining the fifth Proposition, That more is required to fit one that is adult for Church-membership, then is there expressed, viz. Faith in Christ made visible to the Church, without which they are not regularly Church-members.*"

Ans. But the Question here is not, *Whether more be required to Membership then is expressed in that Proposition*; but, *Whether want of opportunity in Parents to do what is there expressed, be a just barre to the childes Priviledge.* It is evident that this is the question here in hand, whereto the Answer of the Synod is Negative, *That this want of opportunity is not a just barre.* But whether it be a just barre, or be not, the Reverend Author saith nothing at all to that, but speaks to another thing, *That more is required to Church-membership then that Proposition doth express*: so that the thing in question seems not to be touched. Yet let us a little consider of this other whereto he leads us, and return back with him to the fifth Proposition.

Concerning which, first, here seems to be a manifest mistake concerning the scope of that fifth Proposition, which is not at all as is here intimated, *whether what is there expressed be enough to fit one that is adult for Church-membership*; but the scope of it is plainly this, to shew, *That such Church-members as were admitted in minority, if*
they

they be qualified as is there expressed, may have their children Baptized: but for fitness for Membership, that Proposition doth not discuss that Point at all; but expressly speaks of such as are Members already, and were admitted long ago, even in their minority. As for that which is here said concerning his Examining that fifth Proposition, We referre the Reader to what hath been formerly there said in Defence of that Proposition.

Further, the Reverend Author saith, "That Baptism administred by ordinary Officers to such as are out of Church-order, is profaned; as Circumcision was by the Shechemites, and would have been by the Ishmaelites and Edomites, if it had been administred to their children, when their Parents were not joyned to the Church, or abode not in it in the Families of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Ans. Still this makes nothing against administring Baptism to the children spoken of in this fifth and sixth Propos. except it could be proved that their Parents are not in Church-order. For the Synod thinks, that as they were admitted into Church-membership in their minority, so they still continue therein; and the contrary we have not yet seen proved. As for the Shechemites, &c. Circumcision might be profaned when administred to them, and yet Baptism not so, when administred to the children in question. For, if the former were not in the Church, yet these are: and whereas the former were vile and vicious in their lives, these other are farre from any such thing; and therefore there is no comparison between the former, and these spoken of, but a vast difference. And we may adde further, That as there is difference between those Shechemites and the rest; and the persons spoken of, both in respect of Church-relation and Conversation; so in respect of this latter, these are farre better then sundry that abode in the Family of Jacob, to whom he will not deny but Circumcision was lawfully administred. We may instance in Simeon and Levi, who committed that odious Cruelty and Blood-shedding, for which their Father laid such a Curse upon them a little afore his death, Gen. 49. And if Circumcision was lawfully administred to the children of these, they abiding in the Family of Jacob, how can Baptism lawfully be denied to the children in question, or be said to be profaned when administred to them,

idem, first they are children of Parents who were once in the Church of God, and were never cast out, nor deserving any such thing, but do still continue therein, and for life and conversation are farre from any such Scandal and Crime as was found in the Sons of Jacob aforesaid.

“ One end of Baptism now (as it was of Circumcision then) is, to seal Church-communion, 1 Cor. 12. 13. and is a testimony of the admission of the party baptized into the Family of God, The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, &c.

Ans. This is no just ground of denying Baptism to the children in question, except it could be proved that neither they nor their Parents are in the Church of God, nor of his Family, which yet we have not seen proved.

“ The regular and lawfull use of Baptism now (as of Circumcision of old) presupposeth both Gods Promise, and his Faith (viz. Faith for justification with Abraham) who is to use it, either upon himself, or upon his infant. To use it, being not so qualified visibly, is it not a treacherous usurping of the Great Seal of the King of Heaven and Earth?

Ans. Neither doth this make against the Baptism of the children in question; forasmuch as their Parents and they are under the Promise of God, I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed in their generations: and the Parents being qualified as in the fifth Proposition, cannot be denied to have Faith visibly, as was shewed by the Synod in their Arguments for Confirming that Proposition, and in this Defence formerly. Sure it is, these Parents may as well be thought to have Faith visibly, as the Sons of Jacob aforesaid, and as many in the Church at Corinth, of whom it is said, that they were culpable for carnall Dissentions, going to Law, Fornication, Uncleanneses, and not repenting thereof, 1 Cor. 1. & 3. & 6. and 2 Cor. 12. and yet being in the Church, and professing Christianity, we suppose the Reverend Author will not deny but their children might be baptized, and the children of Jacobs Sons circumcised, and that this in them was no treacherous usurping of the Seal of the King of Heaven and Earth; and therefore much less can such a thing be imputed to the persons qualified as in the fifth Proposition, though the

the Seal of Baptism be administred to their children. For it is evident, these persons are farre from such offensiveness as was in those *Corinthians*, and in *Reuben*, *Simeon* and *Levi*, but are much more innocent, yea commendable.

So much for *Defence* of the second Reason of the Synod for confirming this sixth Proposition, against what the Reverend Author, in his Answer thereto, saith in his *Disgression*, and turning back to the Proposition foregoing.

The third Reason of the Synod for this sixth Proposition, is, *Because God accepteth that as done in his service, to which there was a manifest desire and endeavour, albeit the acting of it were hindered; as in David to build the Temple, 1 Kings 8. in Abraham to sacrifice his Son, Heb. 11. 17. and in that of Alms, 2 Cor. 8. 12. As in such as are said to be Martyrs in voto, and Baptized in voto, because there was no want of desire that way, though their desire was not actually accomplished.*

To which the Answer of the Reverend Author is, "That this may hold in private services; so that there God accepts the will for the deed, when the acting of it is hindered; but in publick service, he doth not accept of that as done, which is not done, so farre as to bring them into publick state and order, whatever their desires and endeavours have been. And he instanceth in one that desireth to be a Minister, and yet may not do the acts of that Office, afore he be in Office; and in such as desire to joyn to the Church, but may not be received to the Seats afore they be so joyned.

Whereto the answer is, That what is here said is insufficient, as being not suitable to the case in hand, which is not concerning such as are out of Church-state and order, as if desires after that state were enough to bring them into it, though their actual entering were hindered. For it is evident, that the Synod speaks not of such, but of such as are Church-members already, onely have been inevitably hindered from such actions as are mentioned in the sixth Proposition; which actions are not at all spoken of for attaining Church-membership, for that state the Synod accounts that they have attained already: but the actions mentioned are clearly spoken of for another

purpose, viz. for the more orderly, clear, and edifying manner of administration of baptism to their children; themselves, though being in the state and order of Church-members, having not yet been received to the Lords Supper. It is evident, that the Synod speaks of such persons, and of acting for such an end, viz. of persons already in Church-estate, and acting for the end aforesaid; and here in this sixth Proposition of obtaining that end, though their actings, as aforesaid, have been inevitably hindered. Whereas the Reverend Author speaks of such as are not in Church-state and order at all, though they do desire it; and of them he saith, that these desires are not sufficient for their admission unto Church-privileges, when their actual entering into Church-state is hindered: between which, and those spoken of by the Synod, there is great difference; so that if what he saith were granted, yet what is delivered by the Synod is nothing hindered thereby: but though desire of office, or of Church-estate, be not sufficient for doing the duties of the one, or obtaining the privileges of the other, when actual entering into that office and state is hindered; yet when such as are in Church-estate already, do desire to act as in the fifth Proposition, but are inevitably hindered from so acting, what should hinder but they may have their children Baptized, as if they had so acted indeed? And why may not the instances of Gods accepting of Abrahams offering his Son, of Davids building the Temple, and the other mentioned by the Synod, be sufficient Proofs hereof? we see nothing to the contrary but they may. Whereto may be added that in 2 Chron. 30. where the people that prepared their hearts to seek God, are accepted of God in the Passover, though they were not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary: yet whatever it was that hindered their cleansing, their preparing their hearts did imply that they did desire it, and hereupon at the Prayer of Hezekiah they are accepted. And in 1 Sam. 30. when two hundred of Davids men were by faintness hindered that they could not go over the brook Besor, as he and others did, yet he will not yield but that they shall have part of the spoil, as well as others that went down to the Battell; considering that it was not want of will, but want of ability that hindered their acting as others did: and He, as he was in other things, a man after Gods own heart, even so he

was

was in this; and they that would not have had the will of these two hundred accepted, when their deed was so inevitably hindered, are called *wicked men*, and *men of Belial*. By all which the Argument of the Synod is further confirmed and cleared, when they say in this their third Reason, that *God accepts that as done in his service, to which there is a manifest desire and endeavour, albeit the acting of it were hindered*. And, if God accept those as *Martyrs* who are such only in voto, as the Reverend Author seemeth to acknowledge, pag. 49 why may not the like be said of those who are only Baptized in voto? we see no reason but that if in the one case God accep. them as *Martyrs*, he doth also in the other as persons Baptized.

And whereas he saith, "*To be Baptized in voto, will nothing advantage any, as to Church-fellowship, because de occultis non judicat Ecclesia, and things are not manifested to the Church otherwise then by congruous actions.*"

The Answer is, 1. That the thing here spoken of by the Synod, is not at all of receiving into Church-fellowship, as the Reverend Author carries it, but of Baptizing the Children of such as are in Church-state already, and have been so even from their minority.

2. Nor is the desire they speak of so hidden and unknown, that the Church cannot judge of it, but so manifest, that they have given the Church cause in the judgement of charity to look at them as so qualified, as is said, and that had they been called thereto, they would have so acted. So that if it were true, that men could not be received into Church-fellowship by mere desire of such state, when that desire is secret, and not manifest to the Church; yet men that are in Church-state already may have their Children Baptized, when their desires to act, as is mentioned, are sufficiently known to the Church, though their acting hath been inevitably hindered. For these cases do apparently differ; so that what the Synod saith in the one, is not overthrown by what the Reverend Author saith in the other.

3. It is conceived by some, that those who of the Ancients are said to be Baptized in voto, were so spoken of, because they were Martyred before they could actually receive Baptism, and yet that their children were after the death of the Parents actually Baptized and

and accounted of the Church: which if so, doth testifie, That they counted it a great matter to be Baptized *in voto*, sith in such case they would actually apply Baptism to the children, when the Parents had not received it actually, but onely *in voto*, or *in desire*. And how much more may Baptism be applyed to the children in question, whose Parents are not onely Baptized actually, and not in *desire* onely, but have been actually members of the Church even from their birth or minority? onely they have not acted as in the fifth Proposition, but have been inevitably hindred therein, though they have been known to the Church to desire so to have acted.

Fourthly, Saith the Synod, *The termes of the Proposition import that in charity, that is here done interpretatively, which is mentioned to be done in the fifth Proposition expressly.*

The Reverend Author Answereth, "*Its an unwarrantable charity that makes such an interpretation, for it is without warrant of any Rule in Scripture, or in good Reason.*"

Ans. But is this certain, that neither Rule in Scripture, nor good Reason, will give warrant for such charity as is mentioned? If men have been by death, or some extraordinary providence, inevitably hindred from so acting as in the fifth Proposition, and yet have given the Church cause to look at them as such as would have so acted, if they had been thereunto called, and not inevitably hindred, is there yet for all this no warrant in Scripture or good Reason for such charity as is spoken of? For our parts, when God Almighty accepts the will for the deed, when the parties inability hinders from doing so much as he would, 2 Cor. 8. 12. and when Scripture tells us, that Charity thinketh not evil, but believeth all things, hopeth all things, &c. 1 Cor. 13. 5, 7. we cannot but think it better to retain and exercise such charity as is here spoken of, then to be driven or depart from it, as if no Rule of Scripture or good Reason would warrant it.

"If that which is mentioned to be done in the fifth Proposition expressly, is here done interpretatively, both being put together, will not avail to put the Parent regularly into Church-fellowship in any sense, and to give the infant a right to Baptism thereby.

Ans. For putting into Church-fellowship, the things here mentioned by

by the Synod are not by them alledged for that end; and therefore if this that is said by the Reverend Author were granted, the Doctrine of the Synod is not at all weakened thereby: But if the things mentioned be sufficient for the *Baptizing of the children of Parents who are in Church-fellowship already*, the purpose of the Synod is sufficiently gained.

But why do not the things mentioned avail to put the Parent into Church-fellowship? The Reason rendered, is, "*Because by Christs Ordinance onely adult persons, who have true Faith and Holiness, are adult Members of the invisible Church; and the same persons making profession thereof outwardly in the Order by him appointed, may be Members of the visible Church, and they onely can give their infant-seed a right unto Baptism.*"

Ans. And is this certain and clear, that onely they who have true Faith and Holiness, and so are Members of the invisible Church, may be Members of the visible Church, and so their infant-seed have right to Baptism? If this were so, we may question whether it can be lawful for Ministers, or any men, to dispense Baptism to any persons at all: and the reason is, Because they cannot certainly know who have such true Faith and Holiness, and so are Church-members. For what the Reverend Author said a little before in pag. 49. "*That though God search and know the heart, yet the Church doth not, de occultis non judicat Ecclesia; this we believe to be very true: and therefore if this hold, that none may be Members of the visible Church, and give right to their seed unto Baptism, but onely they who have true Faith and Holiness, and so are Members of the Church invisible; we say, if this hold, how can we know who are to be Baptized, such none can certainly know but God onely, whether men have this true Faith and Holiness in their hearts and souls? Therefore we think it more safe to say, that where there is a profession of true Faith and Holiness, and nothing contrary thereto appearing, whereby that profession can be disproved, such persons may be Members of the visible Church, and so have Baptism for their children, whether they be of the invisible Church, or no. And if the persons described in the fifth Proposition be tried by this Rule, we cannot see but as they were in Church-fellowship from their minority*"

ty, so they still continue therein, and so may have their Children baptized, in as much as now they make a good profession before many witnesses, even the whole Church, and do no way contradict their profession by any Scandalous practice in their lives. And therefore, though that be true which the Reverend Author here saith, pag. 50. "That without Faith it is impossible to please God, and that therefore there must be true Faith in them whom he priviledgeth to baptize their Infants: that is, as we understand him, whom he priviledgeth to present their Infants to Baptism; yet for all this it may be lawful enough to administer Baptism to the Children of Parents qualified as in the fifth and sixth Propos. and they that do administer, may have Faith to please God therein, because of the Church-relation and good profession of the Parents, though the Parents cannot please God in presenting their children to that ordinance, if themselves be destitute of the grace of Faith: yet this we must still say, that for any that are so qualified as is said, we see no Scripture-Rule or Reason that will warrant us to judge them so destitute.

So much for Defence of the sixth Proposition.

Propos. 7. *The Members of Orthodox Churches, being sound in the Faith, and not Scandalous in life, and presenting due testimony thereof, these occasionally coming from one Church to another, may have their children baptized in the Church whither they come, by virtue of communion of Churches; But if they remove their habitation, they ought orderly to covenant and subject themselves to the government of Christ in his Church where they settle their abode, and so their Children to be baptized. It being the Churches duty to receive such unto communion, so far as they are regularly fit for the same.*

For confirming of this Proposition in both the Parts or Branches of it, the Synod giveth sundry reasons, whereto the Reverend Author saith nothing in the particulars, but in general, "That he looketh at the regular communion of approved Churches as an Ordinance of Christ: But further then so he saith nothing, either by objection against the Proposition, or by consent unto it? But all he saith is by way of propounding *Queries*, to the number of half a score, or more; and

and then concludes, "That when these and the like Questions are clearly Answered, he shall then understand the true and full sense of this Proposition, and what to say to it. But when the Synod shall come together to Answer these Questions, whether ever or never, we do not know, nor do see any great probability of such a thing; and therefore no more being here said against this Proposition, we may conclude that it yet stands firm and good. And, as he concludes, that *Thus much may suffice, for the present, for Reply to the Synods Answer to the first Question*; So may we conclude, That thus much may suffice, for the present, for *Defence of the Synods Answer against what he saith to the contrary in his Reply*.

Concerning the Reverend Author's Discourse upon the second Question touching *Consociation of Churches*, we shall not trouble the Reader with any large Reply: and we hope it needeth nor, because there appeared no Dissent or Dissatisfaction in the Synod about that matter. Our Brethren that Dissented in the former Question, readily and fully Concurred in this, as themselves declare in *Antisynodalia*, pag. 12. Besides, part of the Reverend Author's Exceptions referring to the *Platform of Discipline*, concluded on with great Unanimity in the Synod held at Cambridge, Anno 1648. (sundry Principal Members whereof, as Mr. Cotton, Shepard, Rogers, Norton, &c. are now at rest with God) we shall not now after so many years, wherein we heard of no Opposition, make that a subject of Debate.

But if the Reader please to take along with him these three or four Considerations, they may serve to take off what is here Objected against us by the Reverend Author.

1. That we never said nor thought, that there should be a *Withdrawing from other Churches upon Differences, Errors or Offences of an inferiour and dubious nature, yea though continued in*. We are

farre enough from *Hastiness* or *Harshness* in that matter, being professed Adversaries to a Spirit of *Sinfull and Rigid Separation*: we hope there is no word in the Synods Conclusions that favioureth thereof, if candidly interpreted. And for *Withdrawing from Brethren* because of Dissent from what is here held forth by this Synod, both our Practice and our Profession in the Preface to that Book, do sufficiently shew us to be farre from it. This may answer what is said this way in *Pag. 54, 55, 57, 63.*

2. That we account not *Consociation of Churches* to be another thing than *Communion of Churches*, but onely an Agreement to Practise that Communion, as is expressly said in *Propos. 3th & 6th*. And therefore we understand not why the Reverend Author should so often praise *Communion of Churches*, as *pag. 58, 59, 60, 61.* and yet dispraise and dislike *Consociation*. Is *Regular Communion* so good and excellent, and can it be hurtful for Churches to agree and consent to Practise it? Neither do we mean by that Agreement, a Vow (as is suggested *pag. 56, 57.*) or a formall Covenant in a strict sense (though Mr. Cotton doth not refuse to call it a Covenant, in *Keyes, p. 54, 59.*) but onely a declared Consent (as is expressed *Propos. 7.*) of each Church to walk in *Regular Communion* with their Neighbour-Churches. And if the Reverend Author doth approve of the Acts of Communion here set down for the substance of them, as it seemeth he doth by what he saith *pag. 52.* why should it be thought a dangerous matter to agree thereunto for the Substance thereof?

We have indeed found in our Experience much good and benefit by *Communion of Churches*, as the Reverend Author acknowledgeth, *pag. 58, 61.* and his acknowledgement thereof we gladly accept; but we have also found, that the want of ready Agreement timoussly to attend and exert the Acts of Communion, hath hazarded the Peace and Well-being of sundry Churches, and exposed them to great Troubles. We do not desire by our proposed *Consociation*, to add any thing to the *Communion of Churches*, but onely a vigorous and tinuous exercise thereof.

3. That we expressly disclaim the *subjecting of a Church unto any other Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction whatsoever*, *Propos. 1.* and therefore it is strange that the Reverend Author should put that upon the Con-

Confociation by us intended, *That it is a subjecting of Churches under Classicall Jurisdiction*, pag. 59. It is not the bare Consent, or mutual Agreement of Churches, but *the nature of the thing consented to, as, viz. The Power they agree to be stated under*, that makes it a Classicall Combination, or puts those Churches under a Classicall Jurisdiction. What though the voluntary Combination, mentioned by Mr. Rutherford, in his sense doth inferre a Classicall Membership and Jurisdiction? Surely it doth not follow that ours does so, when as we expressly disclaim it. But is it true, that where-ever there is a voluntary Combination of Churches, they become a Classicall or Presbyterian Church, and the Members by consenting thereto, become Members of a Classicall Church, and under the Power of it, so as to be Excommunicated by it, &c. as is said pag. 59? what then shall be thought of that known Position of Dr. Ames, *Medul. Lib. 1. cap. 39. Thes. 27.* which is expressly cited and approved by the Reverend Author in his Reply to *Paget*, pag. 224, 225?

Surely it is no new thing with Congregational-men, but their professed Doctrine, with one consent to own some kinde of Combination and Confociation of Churches; but withall we constantly affirm with Dr. Ames in the same place, that *This Combination doth neither constitute any new Form of a Church, nor ought it to take away, or in any measure to diminish that Liberty and Power which Christ hath left to his Churches, but only it serves to direct and promote the same.*

4. Let the Reader please to peruse and consider the Reverend Author's Eleventh and Twelfth premised Position, pag. 6, 7, 8. and compare them with what the Synod hath published touching Confociation of Churches, and we suppose he will finde such an agreement between them, as that he will wonder (as we do) to see the Reverend Author appearing as an Antagonist in this matter. It seems strange, that Brethren should be willing to contend both where they do differ, and where they do not. Also it may be considered, how many Reflexions here are upon us, (as if we would cast a Snare upon Churches, by straitning them in the use and exercise of their Church-power within themselves in re propria; as if we would absolutely binde Churches not to administer Censures within themselves,

themselves, &c.) for which nothing published by the Synod did give any just occasion.

And whereas Mr. Cotton is represented as being against our *Confession*, pag. 60, 61. Let his Printed words be viewed in the *Keyes*, pag. 54—59. his Solemn Speeches of it, to sundry be remembred, and his Draught of it a little before his death be considered, and the Reader will see whether he can joyn in belief with the Reverend Author about that matter. *The Lord guide us by his Spirit into all Truth, and help us to follow the Truth in Love.*

F I N I S.

